MILTON'S

PARADISE LOST.

A NEW EDITION.

Adorned with Beautiful Plates.

VOLUME I.

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The Genius of Milton more particularly
in respect to its span in immensity, calcu-
lated him by a sort of birthright for such
an "argument" as the paradise lost. he
had an exquisite passion for what is
properly in the sense of ease and pleasure
poetical Luxury - and with that it ap-
pears to me he would fain have been
content PARADISE LOST: if he could
so doing have preserved his self respect
and feel of duty performed - but there
was working in him as it were that
same sort of thing as operates in the
great world to the end of a Prophecy's
being accomplished - therefore he devoted
himself rather to the arduous than the
pleasurous of Song, solacing himself at
intervals with cups of old wine - and
these are with some exceptions the
finest parts of the Poem. ~~In a manner~~
~~& the some exceptions~~ - for the spirit
of Wandering and adventure can never
be unmeaning or unrewarded - had he
not broken through the clouds which
environ so deliciously the Cherubim pets
of Eden and committed himself to the
Extreme we never should have seen
Satan as described
= But his Fate
"Dark Scenes of Wonder had intended R

There is a greatness which the Paradise Lost possesses over every other Poem - the Magnitude of Contrast and that is softened by the contrast being unperceive to a degree - Heaven moves on like music throughout - Hell is also peopled with Angels it also moves on like music not grating and harsh but like a grand accompaniment in the Base to Heaven -

ARGUMENT.

THE *first book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject, Man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise wherein he was placed: Then touches the prime cause of his fall, the Serpent, or rather Satan in the serpent; who revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of Angels, was, by the command of God, driven out of Heaven with all his crew into the great deep. Which action passed over, the poem hastens into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his Angels now falling into Hell described here, not in the centre (for Heaven and Earth may be supposed not as yet made, certainly not yet accursed), but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos: Here Satan with his Angels lying on the burning lake, thunderstruck and astonished, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him; they confer of their miserable fall; Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded. They rise, their numbers, array of battle, their chief leaders named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven, but tells them lastly of a new world, and new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in Heaven; for that Angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many Fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium, the palace of Satan, rises, suddenly built out of the deep: The infernal peers there sit in council.*

There is always a great charm in the openings of great poems more particularly where the action begins - Read of Dante's Hell - Of Tasso's. the first step must be heroic and full of Homer and nothing can be more simple and shaded than the commencement of the action here - Round

PARADISE LOST.

He throws his baleful eyes -

BOOK I.

OF Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning how the heavens and earth
Rose out of chaos: Or if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flow'd
Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou knowest; Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,
And madest it pregnant: What in me is dark

Illumine, what is low raise and support;
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to Men.
Say first, for Heaven hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell, say first what cause
Moved our grand parents, in that happy state,
Favour'd of Heaven so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?
The infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile,
Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heaven with all his host
Of rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers,
He trusted to have equall'd the most High,
If he opposed; and with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God,
Raised impious war in Heaven, and battle proud
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded though immortal: But his doom
Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witness'd huge affliction and dismay
Mix'd with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:

At once, as far as Angels' ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild;
A dungeon horrible on all sides round
As one great furnace flamed, yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell; hope never comes
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed:
Such place eternal Justice had prepared
For those rebellious, here their prison ordain'd
In utter darkness, and their portion set
As far removed from God and light of Heaven,
As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.
O how unlike the place from whence they fell!
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns; and weltering by his side,
One next himself in power, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and named
Beëlzebub. To whom the Arch-Enemy,
And thence in Heaven call'd Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence, thus began.
If thou beest he; but O how fallen! how changed
From him, who in the happy realms of light,
Cloth'd with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
Myriads though bright! If he whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise
Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd
In equal ruin: into what pit thou seest
From what height fallen; so much the stronger proved
He with his thunder: and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms? yet not for those,

Nor what the potent victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Tho' changed in outward lustre, that fix'd mind,
And high disdain from sense of injured merit,
That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd,
That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,
His utmost power with adverse power opposed
In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
All is not lost; the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield,
And what is else not to be overcome;
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
Who from the terror of this arm so late
Doubted his empire; that were low indeed,
That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall; since by fate the strength of Gods
And this empyreal substance cannot fail,
Since through experience of this great event
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcileable to our grand foe,
Who now triumphs, and in the excess of joy
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven.

So spake the apostate angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair:
And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer.

O Prince, O Chief of many throned Powers,
That led the embattled Seraphim to war
Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds

Fearless, endanger'd Heaven's perpetual King,
And put to proof his high supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate;
Too well I see and rue the dire event,
That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus low,
As far as Gods and heavenly essences
Can perish: for the mind and spirit remain
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,
Though all our glory 's extinct, and happy state
Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
But what if he our conqueror (whom I now
Of force believe almighty, since no less
Than such could have o'erpower'd such force as ours)
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his business be
Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy deep;
What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment?
Whereto with speedy words the Arch-Fiend replied.
Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
To do ought good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps

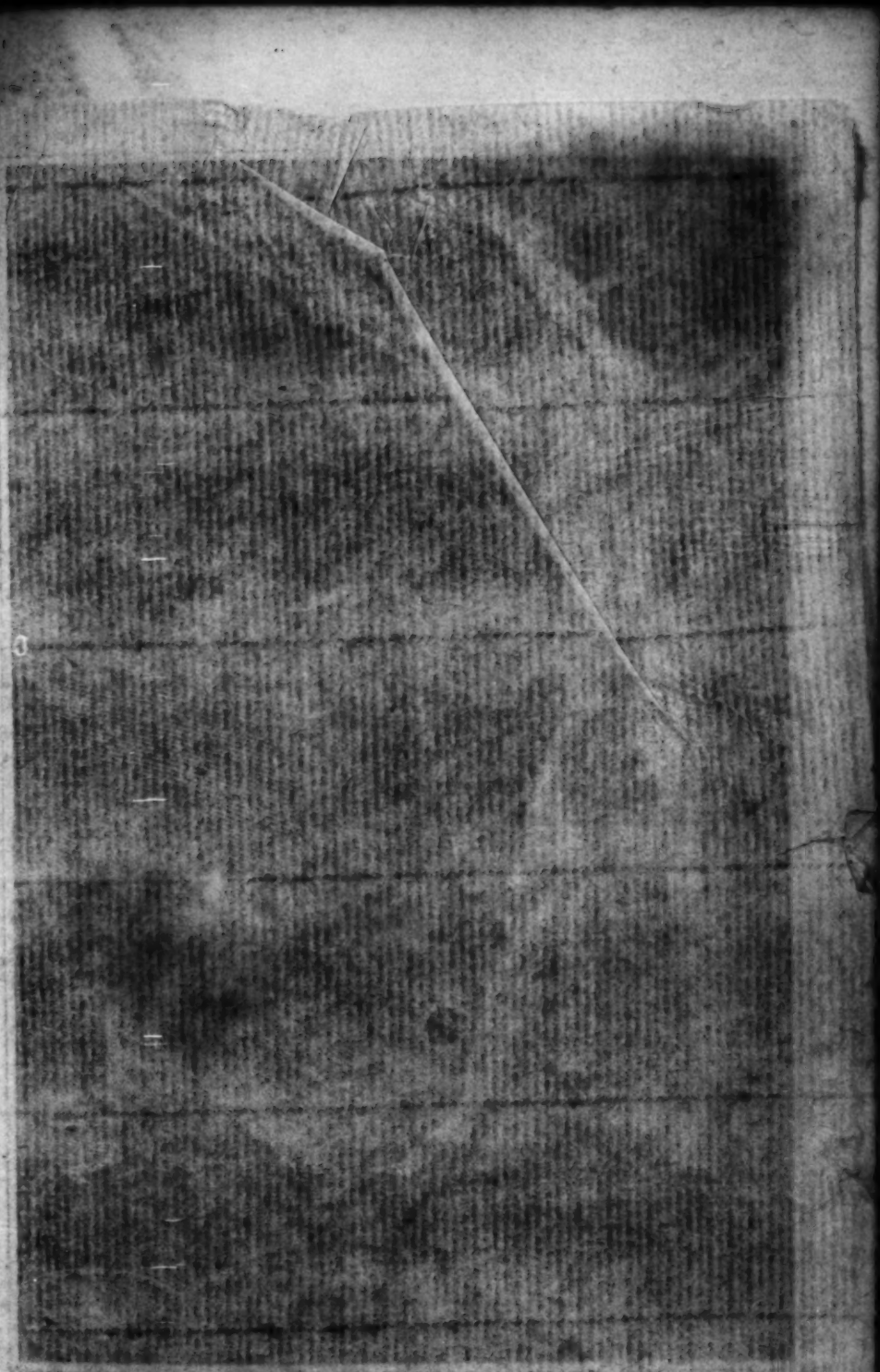
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.
But see the angry victor hath recall'd
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the gates of Heaven: the sulphurous hail
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
The fiery surge, that from the precipice
Of Heaven receiv'd us falling; and the thunder,
Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn,
Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
There rest, if any rest can harbour there;
And re-assembling our afflicted Powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
If not what resolution from despair.
Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate,
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blaz'd, his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove,
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim the ocean stream:

Him haply slumbering on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays:
So stretch'd out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay
Chain'd on the burning lake, nor ever thence
Had risen or heav'd his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs,
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others, and enraged might see
How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shown
On man by him seduced, but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd.
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
Driven backward slope their pointed spires, and roll'd
In billows, leave in the midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air
That felt unusual weight; till on dry land
He lights; if it were land that ever burn'd
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire;
And such appear'd in hue, as when the force
Of subterranean wind transports a hill
Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible
And fuel'd entrails thence conceiving fire,
Sublim'd with mineral fury, aid the winds,
And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him follow'd his next mate,

Both glorying to have 'scap'd the Stygian flood
As Gods, and by their own recover'd strength,
Not by the sufferance of supernal power.
Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
Said then the lost Archangel, this the seat
That we must change for Heaven, this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
Who now is Sovereign can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
Whom reason hath equall'd, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells: Hail horrors, hail
Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell
Receive thy new possessor; one who brings
A mind not to be changed by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
Here we may reign secure, and in my choice
To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:
Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven.
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
The associates and copartners of our loss,
Lie thus astonish'd on the oblivious pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion; or once more
With rallied arms to try what may be yet
Regain'd in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?
So Satan spake, and him Beëlzebub
Thus answer'd. Leader of those armies bright,
Which but the Omnipotent none could have foil'd,
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge

Of hopes in fears and dangers, heard so oft
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
Of battle when it raged, in all assaults
Their surest signal, they will soon resume
New courage, and revive, though now they lie
Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
As we ere while, astounded and amaz'd,
No wonder, fallen such a pernicious height.
He scarce had ceased, when the superior Fiend
Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Behind him cast; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesolé,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
His spear, to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great admiral, were but a wand,
He walk'd with to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marle; not like those steps
On Heaven's azure, and the torrid clime
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire:
Nathless he so endured, till on the beach
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd
His legions, angel forms, who lay entranced
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades
High over-arch'd embower; or scatter'd sedge
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd
Hath vex'd the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursued
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore their floating carcasses

And broken chariot-wheels: so thick bestrown
Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.
He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
Of Hell resounded. Princes, Potentates,
Warriors, the flower of Heaven, once yours, now lost,
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal Spirits; or have ye chosen this place
After the toil of battle to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find
To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
To adore the conqueror? who now beholds
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
With scatter'd arms and ensigns; till anon
His swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern
The advantage, and descending tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.
Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen.
They heard, and were abash'd, and up they sprung
Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch,
On duty sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
Yet to their general's voice they soon obey'd
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Wav'd round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharoah hung
Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:
So numberless were those bad Angels seen
Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;



Till, as a signal given, the uplifted spear
Of their great Sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain;
A multitude, like which the populous North
Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass
Rhine or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
Came like a deluge on the South, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Lybian sands.
Forthwith from every squadron and each band
The heads and leaders thither haste, where stood
Their great commander; godlike shapes and forms
Excelling human, princely dignities,
And powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones;
Though of their names in heavenly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and rased
By their rebellion from the books of life.
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names, till wandering o'er the earth,
Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,
By falsities and lies the greatest part
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and the invisible
Glory of him that made them to transform
Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd
With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
And Devils to adore for Deities:
Then were they known to men by various names,
And various idols through the Heathen world.
Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last
Roused from the slumber, on that fiery couch,
At their great emperor's call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof.
The chief were those who from the pit of Hell
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix

Their seats long after next the seat of God
Their altars by his altar, Gods adored
Among the nations round, and durst abide
Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned
Between the Cherubim; yea, often placed
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned,
And with their darkness durst affront his light.
First Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears,
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their children's cries unheard, that pass'd through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
Worshipp'd in Rabba, and her watery plain,
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Not content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna call'd, the type of Hell.
Next Chemos, the obscene dread of Moab's sons,
From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild
Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines,
And Eleälé to the Asphaltic pool.
Peor his other name, when he enticed
Israel in Sittim on their march from Nile
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged
Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;
Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.

With these came they, who from the bordering flood
Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baalim and Ashtaroth, those male,
These feminine. For Spirits when they please
Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
And uncompounded is their essence pure,
Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they choose,
Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
Can execute their airy purposes,
And works of love or enmity fulfil.
For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their living strength, and unfrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial Gods; for which their heads as low
Bow'd down in battle, sunk before the spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians call'd
Astarte, queen of Heaven, with crescent horns;
To whose bright image nightly by the moon
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;
In Sion also not unsung, where stood
Her temple on the offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,
Beguil'd by fair idolatresses, fell
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In amorous ditties all a summer's day;
While smooth Adonis from his native rock
Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch

Ezekiel saw, when by the vision led
His eye survey'd the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark
Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopt off
In his own temple, on the grunsel edge,
Where he fell flat, and shamed his worshippers;
Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man
And downward fish; yet had his temple high
Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,
And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
He also against the house of God was bold:
A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king,
Ahaz his sottish conqueror, whom he drew
God's altar to disparage and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious offerings, and adore the Gods
Whom he had vanquish'd. After these appear'd
A crew, who under names of old renown,
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused
Fanatic Egypt and her priests to seek
Their wandering Gods disguised in brutish forms
Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
The infection, when their borrow'd gold composed
The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
Likening his Maker to the grazed ox.
Jehovah, who in one night when he pass'd
From Egypt marching, equall'd with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating Gods.
Belial came last, than whom a Spirit more lewd

Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself: to him no temple stood
Or altar smok'd; yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who fill'd
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury and outrage: and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Exposed a matron to avoid worse rape.
These were the prime in order and in might;
The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd,
The Ionian Gods, of Javan's issue held
Gods, yet confess'd later than Heaven and Earth,
Their boasted parents: Titan Heaven's first-born,
With his enormous brood, and birth-right seized
By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove
His own and Rhea's son like measure found;
So Jove usurping reign'd: these first in Crete
And Ida known, thence on the snowy top
Of cold Olympus ruled the middle air,
Their highest Heaven; or on the Delphian cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old
Fled over Adria to the Hesperian fields,
And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.
All these and more came flocking; but with looks
Downcast and damp, yet such wherein appear'd
Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their chief
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
In loss itself; which on his countenance cast

Like doubtful hue: but he his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth not substance, gently raised
Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears.
Then straight commands that at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud and clarions be uprear'd
His mighty standard: that proud honour claim'd
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall;
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd
The imperial ensign, which full high advanced
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich emblazed,
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:
At which the universal host up-sent
A shout, that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air
With orient colours waving: with them rose
A forest huge of spears, and thronging helms
Appear'd, and serried shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable: anon they move
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders; such as raised
To height of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle, and instead of rage
Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmoved
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;
Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage
With solemn touches, troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they
Breathing united force with fixed thought
Moved on in silence to soft pipes, that charm'd
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil; and now

Advanced in view they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield,
Awaiting what command their mighty chief
Had to impose: He through the armed files
Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse
The whole battalion views, their order due,
Their visages and stature as of Gods;
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and hardening in his strength
Glories; for never since created man
Met such embodied force, as named with these
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warr'd on by cranes; though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra with the heroic race were join'd
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mix'd with auxiliar Gods; and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son,
Begirt with British and Armoric knights;
And all who since, baptized or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond,
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore
When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd
Their dread commander: he above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent
Stood like a tower; his form had not yet lost
All her original brightness, nor appear'd
Less than Arch-Angel ruin'd, and the excess
Of glory obscured; as when the sun new risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon
In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change

Perplexes monarchs. Darken'd so, yet shone
Above them all the Arch-Angel: but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
(Far other once beheld in bliss) condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain;
Millions of Spirits for his fault amerced
Of Heaven, and from eternal splendours flung
For his revolt, yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory wither'd: as when Heaven's fire
Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth though bare
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half inclose him round
With all his peers: attention held them mute.
Thrice he essay'd, and thrice in spite of scorn,
Tears such as angels weep, burst forth: at last
Words interwove with sighs found out their way.

O Myriads of immortal Spirits, O powers
Matchless, but with the Almighty, and that strife
Was not inglorious, though the event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change
Hateful to utter: but what power of mind,
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd,
How such united force of Gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse;
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to re-ascend
Self-raised, and repossess their native seat?

For me be witness all the host of Heaven,
If counsels different, or danger shunn'd
By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
Monarch in Heaven, till then as one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent or custom; and his regal state
Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war, provok'd; our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not; that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife
There went a fame in Heaven that he ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation whom his choice regard
Should favour equal to the sons of Heaven:
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere:
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor the abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full counsel must mature: peace is despair'd,
For who can think submission? War then, war
Open or understood must be resolv'd.
He spake: and to confirm his words out-flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumin'd Hell: highly they raged
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
Belch'd fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
Shone with a glossy scurf, undoubted sign
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
The work of sulphur. Thither wing'd with speed
A numerous brigade hastened: as when bands
Of pioneers with spade and pickaxe arm'd
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
Or cast a rampart. Mammom led them on;
Mammom, the least erected Spirit that fell
From Heaven; for e'en in Heaven his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of Heaven's pavement, trodden gold,
That ought divine or holy else enjoy'd
In vision beatific: by him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
Ransack'd the centre, and with impious hands
Rifled the bowels of their mother earth
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Open'd into the hill a spacious wound,
And digg'd out ribs of gold. Let none admire
That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
And strength and art are easily outdone
By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour
What in an age they with incessant toil
And hands innumerable scarce perform.
Nigh on the plain in many cells prepared,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude
With wonderous art founded the massy ore,
Severing each kind, and scumm'd the bullion dross:
A third as soon had form'd within the ground

A various mould, and from the boiling cells
By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook,
As in an organ from one blast of wind
To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave; nor did there want
Cornice or freeze, with bossy sculptures graven;
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
Equall'd in all their glories, to inshrine
Belus or Serapis their Gods, or seat
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile
Stood fix'd her stately height; and straight the doors
Opening their brazen folds, discover, wide
Within, her ample spaces, o'er the smooth
And level pavement: from the arched roof
Pendent by subtle magic many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
With Naphtha and Asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky. The hasty multitude
Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise
And some the architect: his hand was known
In Heaven by many a towered structure high,
Where scepter'd Angels held their residence,
And sat as princes, whom the supreme King
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright.
Nor was his name unheard or unador'd
In ancient Greece: and in Ausonian land
Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell
From Heaven, they fabled, thrown by angry Jove

Sheer o'er the crystal battlements; from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A summer's day; and with the setting sun
Dropt from the zenith like a falling star,
On Lemnos the Ægean isle: thus they relate,
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
Fell long before; nor ought avail'd him now
To have built in Heaven high towers; nor did he 'scape
By all his engines, but was headlong sent
With his industrious crew to build in Hell.

Meanwhile the winged heralds by command
Of sovereign power, with awful ceremony
And trumpets sound throughout the host proclaim
A solemn council forthwith to be held
At Pandemonium, the high capital
Of Satan and his peers: their summons call'd
From every band and squared regiment
By place or choice the worthiest; they anon
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came
Attended: all access was throng'd, the gates
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
(Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold
Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldan's chair
Defied the best of Panim chivalry
To mortal combat, or career with lance)
Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air,
Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
In spring-time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New rubb'd with baum, expatiate and confer
Their state affairs. So thick the airy crowd
Swarm'd and were straiten'd; till the signal given,
Behold a wonder! they but now who seem'd

In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless, like that pigmean race
Beyond the Indian mount, or fairy elves,
Whose midnight revels, by a forest side
Or fountain some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while overhead the moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth
Wheels her pale course, they on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms
Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,
Though without number still amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimensions like themselves,
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim
In close recess, and secret conclave sat;
A thousand Demi-gods on golden seats,
Frequent and full. After short silence then
And summons read, the great consult began.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

ARGUMENT.

The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be to be hazarded for the recovery of Heaven: Some advise it, others dissuade: A third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in Heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature equal or not much inferior to themselves, about this time to be created. Their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search; Satan their chief undertakes alone the voyage, is honoured and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways, and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to Hell gates, finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them, by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between Hell and Heaven; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the Power of that place, to the sight of this new world which he sought.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK II.

High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit raised
To that bad eminence; and from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
Vain war with Heaven; and by success untaught,
His proud imaginations thus display'd.
  Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heaven,
For since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigour, though oppress'd and fallen,
I give not Heaven for lost. From this descent
Celestial virtues rising, will appear
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate.
Me, though just right, and the fix'd laws of Heaven
Did first create your leader; next free choice,
With what besides, in council or in fight,
Hath been atchiev'd of merit; yet this loss
Thus far at least recover'd, hath much more

Establish'd in a safe unenvied throne,
Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In Heaven, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior: but who here
Will envy whom the highest place exposes
Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim,
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share,
Of endless pain? where there is then no good
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
From faction; for none sure will claim in Hell
Precedence; none, whose portion is so small
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more. With this advantage then
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in Heaven, we now return,
To claim our just inheritance of old,
Surer to prosper than prosperity
Could have assured us; and by what best way,
Whether of open war or covert guile,
We now debate: who can advise, may speak.

He ceased; and next him Moloch, scepter'd king,
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest Spirit
That fought in Heaven, now fiercer by despair:
His trust was with the Eternal to be deem'd
Equal in strength, and rather than be less
Cared not to be at all; with that care lost
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse
He reck'd not; and these words thereafter spake.

My sentence is for open war: of wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not; them let those
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now.
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait
The signal to ascend, sit lingering here
Heaven's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,

The prison of his tyranny who reigns
By our delay? no, rather let us choose,
Arm'd with Hell flames and fury, all at once
O'er Heaven's high Towers to force resistless way,
Turning our Tortures into horrid arms
Against the Torturer; when to meet the noise
Of his almighty engine he shall hear
Infernal thunder; and for lightning see
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his Angels; and his throne itself
Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But perhaps
The way seems difficult and steep, to scale
With upright wing against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,
That in our proper motion we ascend
Up to our native seat: descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursued us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low? The ascent is easy then;
The event is fear'd; should we again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction; if there be in Hell
Fear to be worse destroy'd: what can be worse
Than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, condemn'd
In this abhorred deep to utter woe;
Where pain of unextinguishable fire
Must exercise us without hope of end,
The vassals of his anger, when the scourge
Inexorably, and the torturing hour
Calls us to penance? More destroy'd than thus
We should be quite abolish'd and expire.
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense

His utmost ire? which to the height enraged,
Will either quite consume us, and reduce
To nothing this essential; happier far
Than miserable to have eternal being:
Or, if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel
Our power sufficient to disturb his Heaven,
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:
Which, if not victory, is yet revenge.
He ended frowning, and his look denounced
Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous
To less than Gods. On the other side uprose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane;
A fairer person lost not Heaven; he seem'd
For dignity composed and high exploit:
But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest councils: for his thoughts were low;
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful: yet he pleased the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began.
I should be much for open war, O Peers,
As not behind in hate, if what was urged
Main reason to persuade immediate war,
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success:
When he who most excels in fact of arms,
In what he counsels and in what excels
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
First, what revenge? the towers of Heaven are fill'd
With armed watch, that render all access

Impregnable; oft on the bordering deep
Encamp their legions, or with obscure wing
Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise
With blackest insurrection, to confound
Heaven's purest Light; yet our great enemy
All incorruptible would on his throne
Sit unpolluted; and the ethereal mould,
Incapable of stain, would soon expel
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
Victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope
Is flat despair: we must exasperate
The almighty Victor to spend all his rage,
And that must end us; that must be our cure,
To be no more; sad cure! for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated night,
Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows,
Let this be good, whether our angry foe
Can give it, or will ever? how he can
Is doubtful; that he never will, is sure.
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,
Belike through impotence, or unaware,
To give his enemies their wish, and end
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
To punish endless? Wherefore cease we then?
Say they who counsel war, we are decreed,
Reserv'd and destin'd to eternal woe;
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
What, when we fled amain, pursued and struck
With Heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought

Of new subjection; with what eyes could we
Stand in his presence humble, and receive
Strict laws imposed, to celebrate his throne
With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
Forced Hallelujahs; while he lordly sits
Our envied Sovereign and his altar breathes
Ambrosial odours and ambrosial flowers,
Our servile offerings? This must be our task
In Heaven, this our delight; how wearisome
Eternity so spent, in worship paid
To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue
By force impossible, by leave obtain'd
Unacceptable, though in Heaven, our state
Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek
Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
Free, and to none accountable, preferring
Hard liberty before the easy yoke
Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse
We can create; and in what place soe'er
Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain,
Through labour and indurance. This deep world
Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
Thick clouds and dark doth Heaven's all-ruling Sire
Choose to reside, his glory unobscured,
And with the majesty of darkness round
Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar
Mustering their rage, and Heaven resembles Hell?
As he our darkness, cannot we his light
Imitate when we please? This desert soil
Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;
Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
Magnificence: and what can Heaven shew more?
Our torments also may in length of time

Become our elements; these piercing fires
As soft as now severe, our temper changed
Into their temper; which must needs remove
The sensible of pain. All things invite
To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
Of order, how in safety best we may
Compose our present evils, with regard
Of what we are, and where; dismissing quite
All thoughts of war: Ye have what I advise.
He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd
The assembly, as when hollow rocks retain
The sound of blustering winds, which all night long
Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
Seafaring men o'erwatch'd, whose bark by chance
Or pinnace anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest: Such applause was heard
As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleased,
Advising peace: for such another field
They dreaded worse than Hell: So much the fear
Of thunder and the sword of Michael
Wrought still within them; and no less desire
To found this nether empire, which might rise
By policy, and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to Heaven.
Which when Beëlzebub perceived, than whom,
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
A pillar of state; deep on his front engraven
Deliberation sat, and public care;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestic, though in ruin: sage he stood
With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
Drew audience and attention still as night
Or summer's noon-tide air, while thus he spake,

Thrones and Imperial Powers, Offspring of Heaven,
Ethereal Virtues; or these titles now
Must we renounce, and changing style, be call'd
Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
A growing empire; doubtless; while we dream,
And know not that the King of Heaven hath doom'd
This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat
Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
From Heaven's high jurisdiction, in new league
Banded against his throne, but to remain
In strictest bondage, though thus far removed
Under the inevitable curb, reserved
His captive multitude: for he, be sure,
In heighth or depth, still first and last will reign
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part
By our revolt, but over Hell extend
His empire, and with iron sceptre rule
Us here, as with his golden those in Heaven.
What sit we then projecting peace and war?
War hath determined us, and foil'd with loss
Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
Vouchsafed or sought; for what peace will be given
To us enslaved, but custody severe,
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted? and what peace can we return,
But to our power hostility and hate,
Untamed reluctance, and revenge though slow,
Yet ever plotting how the conqueror least
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
In doing what we most in suffering feel?
Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
With dangerous expedition to invade
Heaven, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,
Or ambush from the deep. What if we find
Some easier enterprise? There is a place,

(If ancient and prophetic fame in Heaven
Err not), another world, the happy seat
Of some new race call'd Man, about this time
To be created like to us, though less
In power and excellence, but favour'd more
Of Him who rules above; so was his will
Pronounced among the Gods, and by an oath,
That shook Heaven's whole circumference, confirm'd.
Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
What creatures there inhabit, of what mould
Or substance, how indued, and what their power,
And where their weakness, how attempted best,
By force or subtlety. Though Heaven be shut,
And Heaven's High Arbitrator sit secure
In his own strength, this place may lie exposed,
The utmost border of his kingdom, left
To their defence who hold it: Here perhaps
Some advantageous act may be atchieved
By sudden onset; either with Hell fire
To waste his whole creation, or possess
All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
The puny habitants, or, if not drive,
Seduce them to our party, that their God,
May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works. This would surpass
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
In our confusion, and our joy upraise
In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
Their frail original, and faded bliss,
Faded so soon. Advise, if this be worth
Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
Hatching vain empires. Thus Beëlzebub
Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devised
By Satan, and in part proposed: For whence,
But from the author of all ill, could spring

So deep a malice, to confound the race
Of mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell
To mingle and involve, done all to spite
The great Creator? But their spite still serves
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleased highly those infernal States, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes; with full ascent
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews.
Well have ye judged, well ended long debate,
Synod of Gods, and, like to what ye are,
Great things resolved, which, from the lowest deep
Will once more lift us up in spite of fate,
Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view [arms
Of those bright confines, whence with neighbouring
And opportune excursion, we may chance
Re-enter Heaven; or else in some mild zone
Dwell, not unvisited of Heaven's fair light,
Secure; and at the brightening orient beam
Purge off this gloom; the soft delicious air,
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
Shall breathe her balm. But first whom shall we send
In search of this new world? Whom shall we find
Sufficient? Who shall tempt with wandering feet
The dark unbottom'd infinite abyss,
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth way, or spread his airy flight
Upborne with indefatigable wings
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
The happy isle? What strength, what art can then
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
Through the strict sentries and stations thick
Of Angels watching round? Here he had need
All circumspection, and we now no less
Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send,
The weight of all and our last hope relies.

This said, he sat; and expectation held
His look suspense, awaiting who appear'd
To second, or oppose, or undertake
The perilous attempt: but all sat mute,
Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each
In other's countenance read his own dismay,
Astonish'd: None among the choice and prime
Of those Heaven-warring champions could be found
So hardy as to proffer or accept
Alone, the dreadful voyage; till at last
Satan, whom now transcendent glory raised
Above his fellows, with monarchial pride,
Conscious of highest worth, unmoved thus spake.
O Progeny of Heaven, empyreal Thrones,
With reason hath deep silence and demur
Seized us, though undismay'd: long is the way
And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light;
Our prison strong; this huge convex of fire,
Outrageous to devour, immures us round
Ninefold; and gates of burning adamant
Barr'd over us, prohibit all egress.
These pass'd, if any pass, the void profound
Of unessential Night receives him next
Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being
Threatens him, plunged in that abortive gulf.
If thence he 'scape into whatever world,
Or unknown region, what remains him less
Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?
But I should ill become this throne, O Peers,
And this imperial sovereignty, adorn'd
With splendour, arm'd with power, if ought proposed
And judged of public moment, in the shape
Of difficulty or danger, could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume
These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
Refusing to accept as great a share

Of hazard as of honour, due alike
To him who reigns, and so much to him due
Of hazard more, as he above the rest
High honour'd sits? Go therefore, mighty Powers,
Terror of Heaven, though fallen; intend at home
While here shall be our home, what best may ease
The present misery, and render Hell
More tolerable; if there be cure or charm
To respite, or relieve, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion: intermit no watch
Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad
Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek
Deliverance for us all: this enterprise
None shall partake with me. Thus saying, rose
The Monarch, and prevented all reply;
Prudent, lest, from his resolution raised,
Others among the chief might offer now
(Certain to be refused) what erst they fear'd;
And, so refused, might in opinion stand
His rivals; winning cheap the high repute
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more the adventure than his voice
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose;
Their rising all at once was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
With awful reverence prone; and as a God
Extol him equal to the highest in Heaven:
Nor fail'd they to express how much they praised
That for the general safety he despised
His own: for neither do the Spirits damn'd
Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast
Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,
Or close ambition varnish'd o'er with zeal.
Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
Ended rejoicing in their matchless chief:
As when from mountain-tops the dusky clouds

Ascending, while the north-wind sleeps, o'erspread
Heaven's cheerful face, the lowering element
Scowls o'er the darkened landskip, snow or shower;
If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
O shame to men! Devil with Devil damn'd
Firm concord holds, men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heavenly grace: and, God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife,
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
That, day and night, for his destruction wait.
The Stygian council thus dissolved; and forth
In order came the grand infernal peers:
Midst came their mighty paramount, and seem'd
Alone the antagonist of Heaven, nor less
Than Hell's dread emperor with pomp supreme,
And God-like imitated state; him round
A globe of fiery Seraphim inclosed
With bright emblazonry, and horrent arms.
Then of their session ended they bid cry
With trumpets regal sound the great result:
Towards the four winds four speedy Cherubim
Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy
By heralds voice explain'd; the hollow abyss
Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell
With deafening shout return'd them loud acclaim,
Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat raised
By false presumptuous hope, the ranged Powers
Disband, and wandering, each his several way
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice

Leads him perplex'd, where he may likeliest find
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
The irksome hours, till his great chief return.
Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,
Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,
As at the Olympian games or Pythian fields;
Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form.
As when, to warn proud cities, war appears
Waged in the troubled sky, and armies rush
To battle in the clouds, before each van
Prick forth the airy knights, and couch their spears
Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms
From either end of Heaven the welkin burns.
Others, with vast Typhœan rage more fell,
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air
In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar.
As when Alcides, from Œchalia crown'd
With conquest, felt the envenom'd robe, and tore
Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,
And Lichas from the top of Œta threw
Into the Euboic sea. Others more mild,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing
With notes angelical to many a harp
Their own heroic deeds and hapless fall
By doom of battle; and complain that fate
Free virtue should inthrall to force or chance.
Their song was partial, but the harmony
(What could it less when Spirits immortal sing?)
Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet
(For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense,)
Others apart sat on a hill retired,
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,

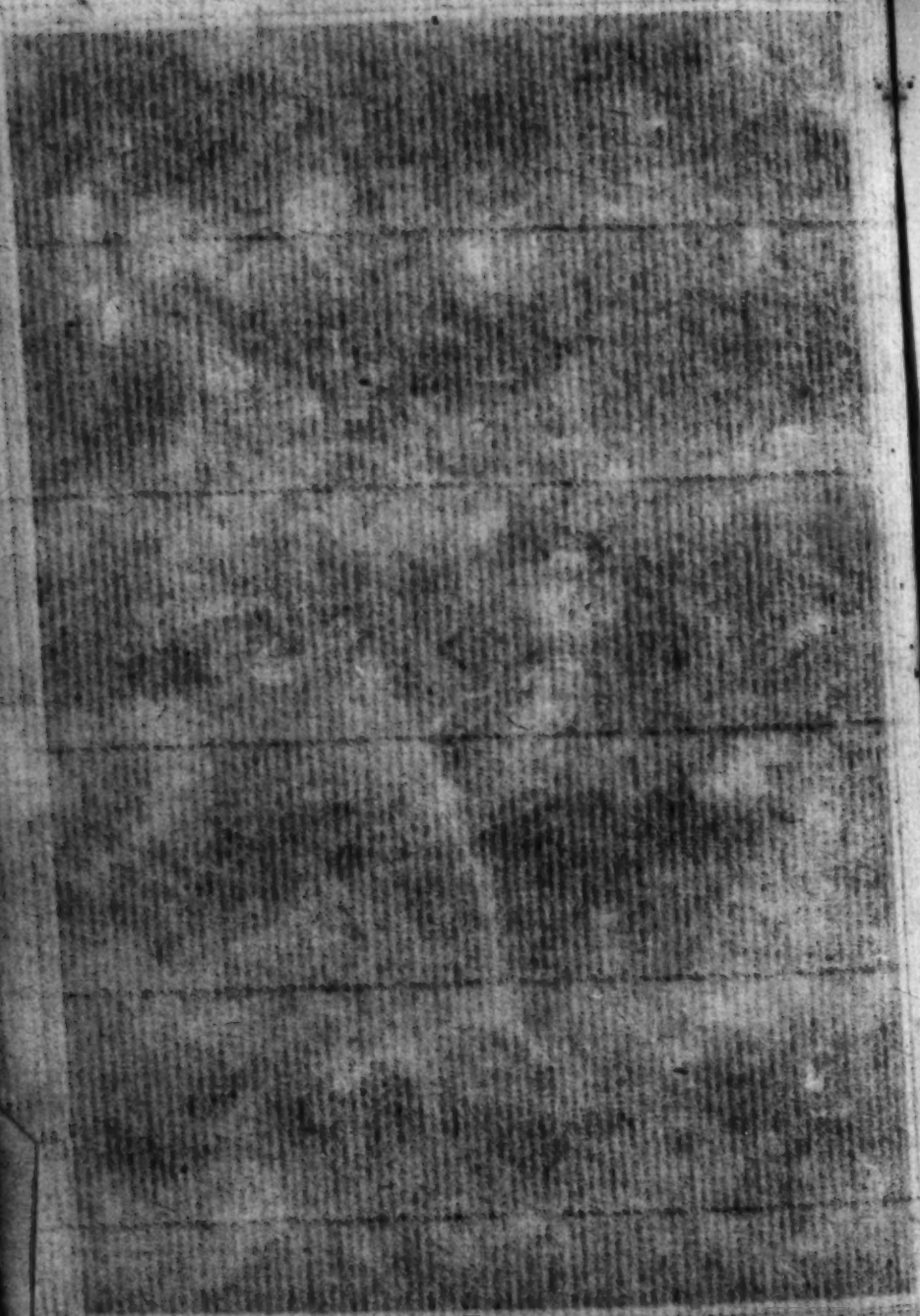
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame,
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy;
Yet, with a pleasing sorcery, could charm
Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm the obdurate breast
With stubborn patience as with triple steel.
Another part, in squadrons and gross bands,
On bold adventure to discover wide
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
Might yield them easier habitation, bend
Four ways their flying march, along the banks
Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge
Into the burning lake their baleful streams;
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;
Cocytus, named of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon,
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,
Lethé, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks,
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Beyond this flood a frozen continent
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems
Of ancient pile; or else deep snow and ice,
A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog
Betwixt Damiata and mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
Burns frore, and cold performs the effect of fire.
Thither by harpy-footed furies haled,

At certain revolutions, all the damn'd
Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
From beds of raging fire to starve in ice
Their soft etherial warmth, and there to pine
Immoveable, infix'd, and frozen round,
Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire.
They ferry over this Lethean sound
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
All in one moment, and so near the brink;
But fate withstands, and to oppose the attempt
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards
The ford, and of itself the water flies
All taste of living wight, as once it fled
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
In confused march forlorn, the adventurous bands
With shuddering horror pale, and eyes aghast,
View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale
They pass'd, and many a region dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp,
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,
A universe of death; which God by curse
Created evil, for evil only good,
Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceived,
Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras dire.

Meanwhile the Adversary of God and Man,
Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest design,
Puts on swift wings, and towards the gates of Hell
Explores his solitary flight; sometimes

He scours the righthand coast, sometimes the left;
Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
Up to the fiery concave towering high.
As when far off at sea a fleet descried
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs: they, on the trading flood
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape,
Ply stemming nightly toward the pole: So seem'd
Far off the flying Fiend. At last appear
Hell bounds high reaching to the horrid roof,
And thrice threefold the gates; three folds were brass,
Three iron, three of adamantine rock
Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire,
Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat
On either side a formidable shape;
The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair,
But ended foul in many a scaly fold
Voluminous and vast, a serpent arm'd
With mortal sting: about her middle round
A cry of Hell-hounds never ceasing bark'd
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal: yet, when they list, would creep,
If ought disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there; yet there still bark'd and howl'd,
Within unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these
Vex'd Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:
Nor uglier follow the night hag, when called
In secret riding through the air she comes,
Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance,
With Lapland witches, while the labouring moon
Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,
If shape it might be called that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;

Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
For each seem'd either; black it stood as Night,
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful dart; what seem'd his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
The monster moving onward came as fast
With horrid strides; Hell trembled as he strode.
The undaunted Fiend what this might be admired,
Admired, not feared; God and his Son except,
Created thing nought valued he nor shunn'd;
And with disdainful look thus first began.
Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,
That darest, though grim and terrible, advance
Thy miscreated front athwart my way
To yonder gates? through them I mean to pass,
That be assured, without leave ask'd of thee:
Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
Hell-born, not to contend with Spirits of Heaven.
To whom the goblin full of wrath replied,
Art thou that Traitor-Angel, art thou He,
Who first broke peace in Heaven and faith, till then
Unbroken; and in proud rebellious arms
Drew after him the third part of Heaven's sons
Conjured against the Highest; for which both thou
And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd
To waste eternal days in woe and pain?
And reckonest thou thyself with Spirits of Heaven,
Hell doom'd, and breathest defiance here and scorn
Where I reign king, and, to enrage thee more,
Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,
False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings,
Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
Thy lingering, or with one stroke of this dart
Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before.
So spake the grisly Terror, and in shape,



So speaking and so threatening, grew tenfold
More dreadful and deform. On the other side,
Incensed with indignation, Satan stood
Unterrified, and like a comet burn'd,
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
In the Arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
Levell'd his deadly aim: their fatal hands
No second stroke intend; and such a frown
Each cast at the other, as when two black clouds,
With Heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caspian, then stand front to front,
Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow
To join their dark encounter in mid air:
So frown'd the mighty combatants, that Hell
Grew darker at their frown, so match'd they stood;
For never but once more was either like
To meet so great a foe; And now great deeds
Had been achieved, whereof all Hell had rung,
Had not the snaky sorceress that sat
Fast by Hell gate, and kept the fatal key,
Risen, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.

O Father, what intends thy hand, she cried,
Against thy only Son? What fury, O Son,
Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
Against thy Father's head? and knowest for whom;
For him who sits above and laughs the while
At thee ordain'd his drudge, to execute
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;
His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.

She spake, and at her words the hellish pest
Forbore: then these to her Satan return'd.

So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand
Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds
What it intends; till first I know of thee,

What thing thou art, thus double form'd, and why
In this infernal vale first met, thou callst
Me Father, and that phantasm callst my Son;
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable than him and thee.
To whom thus the portress of Hell gate replied.
Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
Now in thine eyes so foul? Once deem'd so fair
In Heaven, when at the assembly, and in sight
Of all the Seraphim with thee combined
In bold conspiracy against Heaven's king.
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surprised thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth, till on the left side opening wide,
Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,
Then shining heavenly fair, a Goddess arm'd
Out of thy head I sprung: Amazement seized
All the host of Heaven; back they recoil'd afraid
At first, and call'd me SIN, and for a sign
Portentous held me; but familiar grown,
I pleased, and with attractive graces won
The most adverse, thee chiefly, who full oft
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing
Becamest enamour'd, and such joy thou tookst
With me in secret, that my womb conceived
A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose,
And fields were fought in Heaven: wherein remain'd
(For what could else?) to our Almighty Foe
Clear victory, to our part loss and rout
Through all the empyrean: down they fell
Driven headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down
Into this deep, and in the general fall
I also; at which time this powerful key
Into my hand was given, with charge to keep
These gates for ever shut, which none can pass

Without my opening. Pensive here I sat
Alone; but long I sat not, till my womb
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown
Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes.
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way
Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
Transform'd: but he my inbred enemy
Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart
Made to destroy: I fled, and cried out DEATH!
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sighed
From all her caves, and back resounded Death!
I fled; but he pursued, (though more, it seems,
Inflamed with lust than rage), and, swifter far,
Me overtook, his mother, all dismayed,
And in embraces forcible and foul
Ingendering with me, of that rape begot
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
Surround me, as thou sawst, hourly conceived
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
To me; for when they list, into the womb
That bred them, they return, and howl and gnaw
My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth
Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,
That rest or intermission none I find.
Before my eyes in opposition sits
Grim Death my son and foe, who sets them on,
And me his parent would full soon devour
For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involved; and knows that I
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
Whenever that shall be; so fate pronounced.
But thou, O Father, I forewarn thee, shun
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
To be invulnerable in those bright arms,

Though temper'd heavenly, for that mortal dint,
Save he who reigns above, none can resist.
She finish'd, and the subtle Fiend his lore
Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth.
Dear Daughter, since thou claimest me for thy Sire,
And my fair son here showest me, the dear pledge
Of dalliance had with thee in Heaven, and joys
Then sweet, now sad to mention, thro' dire change
Befallen us unforeseen, unthought of, know
I come no enemy, but to set free
From out this dark and dismal house of pain,
Both him and thee, and all the heavenly host
Of Spirits that in our just pretences arm'd
Fell with us from on high: from them I go
This uncouth errand sole, and one for all
Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
The unfounded deep, and thro' the void immense
To search with wandering quest a place foretold
Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
Created vast and round, a place of bliss
In the purlieus of heaven, and therein placed
A race of upstart creatures, to supply
Perhaps our vacant room, tho' more removed,
Lest heaven surcharged with potent multitude
Might hap to move new broils: be this or ought
Than this more secret now design'd, I haste
To know, and this once known, shall soon return,
And bring ye to the place where thou and Death
Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
Wing silently the buxom air, embalm'd
With odours; there ye shall be fed and fill'd
Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey.
He ceased, for both seem'd highly pleased, and Death
Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
His famine should be fill'd, and bless'd his maw

Destined to that good hour: no less rejoiced
His mother bad, and thus bespake her Sire.
The key of this infernal pit by due,
And by command of Heaven's all-powerful king,
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
These adamantine gates; against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might.
But what owe I to his commands above
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful office here confined,
Inhabitant of Heaven, and heavenly born,
Here in perpetual agony and pain,
With terrors and with clamours compass'd round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
My being gavest me; whom should I obey
But thee, whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliss, among
The Gods who live at ease, where I shall reign
At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end.
Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
And towards the gate rolling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high updrew,
Which but herself not all the Stygian powers
Could once have moved; then in the key-hole turns
The intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
Unfastens: on a sudden open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound
The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut

Excell'd her power; the gates wide open stood,
That with extended wings a banner'd host
Under spread ensigns marching might pass through
With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;
So wide they stood, and like a furnace mouth
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
Before their eyes in sudden view appear
The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark
Illimitable Ocean without bound,
Without dimension, where length, breadth, and
And time and place are lost; where eldest Night
And Chaos, ancestors of nature, hold
Eternal Anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce
Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring
Their embryon atoms; they around the flag
Of each his faction, in their several clans,
Light-arm'd, or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or slow,
Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the sands
Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,
Levied to side with warring winds, and poise
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
He rules a moment; Chaos umpire sits,
And by decision more embroils the fray
By which he reigns: next him high arbiter
Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss,
The womb of nature and perhaps her grave,
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd
Confusedly, and which thus must ever fight,
Unless the Almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more worlds,
Into this wild abyss the wary Fiend
Stood on the brink of Hell and look'd awhile,
Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith

He had to cross. Nor was his ear less peal'd
With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
Great things with small) than when Bellona storms,
With all her battering engines bent to rase
Some capital city; or less than if this frame
Of Heaven were falling, and these elements
In mutiny had from her axle torn
The stedfast earth. At last his sail-broad vanes
He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke
Uplifted spurns the ground, thence many a league
As in a cloudy chair ascending rides
Audacious, but that seat soon failing, meets
A vast vacuity: all unawares
Fluttering his pinions vain, plumb down he drops
Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour
Down had been falling, had not by ill chance
The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud
Instinct with fire and nitre hurried him
As many miles aloft: that fury staid,
Quench'd in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,
Nor good dry land: nigh founder'd on he fares,
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.
As when a Gryphon through the wilderness
With winged course o'er hill or moory dale,
Pursues the Arimaspian, who by stealth
Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
The guarded gold: so eagerly the Fiend
O'er bog or steep, thro' strait, rough, dense or rare,
With head, hands, wings or feet pursues his way,
And swims or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies:
At length a universal hubbub wild
Of stunning sounds and voices all confused
Borne through the hollow dark assaults his ear
With loudest vehemence: thither he plies,

Undaunted to meet there whatever Power
Or Spirit of the nethermost abyss
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies
Bordering on light; when strait behold the throne
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread
Wide on the wasteful deep; with him enthroned
Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
The consort of his reign; and by them stood
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
Of Demogorgon; Rumour next and Chance,
And Tumult and Confusion all embroil'd,
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.
To whom Satan turning boldly, thus. Ye Powers
And Spirits of this nethermost abyss,
Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy,
With purpose to explore or to disturb
The secrets of your realm, but by constraint
Wandering this darksome desert, as my way
Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek
What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
Confine with Heaven; or if some other place
From your dominion won, the etherial king
Possesses lately, thither to arrive
I travel this profound, direct my course;
Directed no mean recompence it brings
To your behoof, if I that region lost,
All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce
To her original darkness and your sway
(Which is my present journey) and once more
Erect the standard there of ancient Night;
Yours be the advantage all, mine the revenge.
Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old
With faultering speech and visage incomposed
Answer'd. I know thee, stranger, who thou art,

That mighty leading Angel, who of late
Made head against Heaven's king, tho' overthrown.
I saw and heard, for such a numerous host
Fled not in silence through the frighted deep
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
Confusion worse confounded; and Heaven gates
Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
Keep residence; if all I can will serve,
That little which is left so to defend,
Encroach'd on still through your intestine broils
Weakening the sceptre of old Night: first Hell
Your dungeon stretching far and wide beneath;
Now lately Heaven and earth, another world,
Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain
To that side Heaven from whence your legions fell:
If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger; go and speed;
Havock and spoil and ruin are my gain.
He ceased; and Satan staid not to reply,
But glad that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity and force renew'd
Springs upward like a pyramid of fire
Into the wild expanse, and through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round
Environ'd wins his way; harder beset
And more endanger'd, than when Argo pass'd
Through Bosphorus betwixt the justling rocks:
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunn'd
Charybdis, and by the other whirlpool steer'd.
So he with difficulty and labour hard
Moved on, with difficulty and labour he;
But he once past, soon after, when man fell,
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain
Following his track, such was the will of Heaven,
Paved after him a broad and beaten way

Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
Tamely endured a bridge of wonderous length
From Hell continued reaching the utmost orb
Of this frail world; by which the spirits perverse
With easy intercourse pass to and fro
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
God and good angels guard by special grace.
But now at last the sacred influence
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heaven
Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night
A glimmering dawn; here nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire,
As from her outmost works a broken foe
With tumult less and with less hostile din,
That Satan with less toil, and now with ease
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,
And like a weather-beaten vessel holds
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn;
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air;
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
Far off the empyreal Heaven, extended wide
In circuit, undetermined square or round,
With opal towers and battlements adorn'd
Of living sapphire, once his native seat;
And fast by hanging in a golden chain
This pendant world, in bigness as a star
Of smallest magnitude close by the moon,
Thither full fraught with mischievous revenge,
Accursed, and in a cursed hour he hies.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK III.

ARGUMENT.

God, sitting on his throne, sees Satan flying towards this world, then newly created; shews him to the Son who sat at his right hand; foretells the success of Satan in perverting mankind; clears his own justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created Man free, and able enough to have withstood his tempter; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduced. The Son of God renders praises to his Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards Man: but God again declares, that Grace cannot be extended towards Man without the satisfaction of divine justice: Man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to Godhead, and therefore, with all his progeny, devoted to death, must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for Man; the Father accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in Heaven and Earth; commands all the Angels to adore him; they obey, and hymning to their harps in full quire, celebrate the Father and the Son. Meanwhile Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb; where wandering he first finds a place, since called the Limbo of vanity; what persons and things fly up thither: thence comes to the gate of Heaven, described ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it: His passage thence to the orb of the sun; he finds there Uriel the regent of that orb, but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner Angel: and pretending a zealous desire to behold the new creation, and Man whom God had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed: alights first on mount Niphates.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK III.

HAIL, holy Light, offspring of Heaven-first-born!
Or of the Eternal co-eternal beam
May I express thee unblamed? since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
Or hearest thou rather, pure etherial stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? before the sun,
Before the Heavens thou wert, and, at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle didst invest
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite.
Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
Escaped the Stygian pool, though long detain'd
In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight
Through utter and through middle darkness borne,
With other notes than to the Orphéan lyre,
I sung of Chaos and eternal Night,
Taught by the heavenly Muse to venture down
The dark descent, and up to re-ascend,
Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,
And feel thy sovereign vital lamp; but thou

Revisitst not these eyes, that roll in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,
Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
Cease I to wander, where the Muses haunt
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath,
That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget
Those other two equall'd with me in fate,
So were I equall'd with them in renown,
Blind Thamyris and blind Mæonides,
And Tiresias and Phineus, prophets old:
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
Presented with an universal blank
Of nature's works, to me expunged and rased,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou, celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

Now had the Almighty Father from above,
From the pure empyrean where he sits
High thrcned above all height, bent down his eye,

His own works and their works at once to view.
About him all the Sanctities of Heaven
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight received
Beatitude past utterance; on his right
The radiant image of his glory sat,
His only Son: on earth he first beheld
Our two first parents, yet the only two
Of mankind, in the happy garden placed,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,
In blissful solitude; he then survey'd
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there
Coasting the wall of Heaven on this sight Night
In the dun air sublime, and ready now
To stoop, with wearied wings and willing feet,
On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd
Firm land embosom'd, without firmament,
Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
Him God beholding from his prospect high,
Wherein past, present, future, he beholds,
Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake.
Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage
Transports our Adversary, whom no bounds
Prescribed, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains
Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyss,
Wide interrupt, can hold? so bent he seems
On desperate revenge, that shall redound
Upon his own rebellious head. And now,
Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way
Not far off Heaven, in the precincts of light,
Directly towards the new created world,
And Man there placed, with purpose to assay
If him by force he can destroy, or worse,
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert,
For Man will hearken to his glozing lies,
And easily transgress the sole command,

Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall
He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
All he could have; I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
Such I created all the etherial Powers,
And Spirits, both them who stood and them who fail'd;
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,
Where only what they needs must do appear'd,
Not what they would? what praise could they receive?
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
When will and reason (reason also is choice)
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
Made passive both, had served necessity,
Not me? They therefore, as to right belong'd,
So were created, nor can justly accuse
Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
As if predestination overruled
Their will, disposed by absolute decree
Or high foreknowledge; they themselves decreed
Their own revolt, not I: if I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.
So without least impulse or shadow of fate,
Or ought by me immutably foreseen,
They trespass, authors to themselves in all
Both what they judge and what they choose; for so
I form'd them free, and free they must remain,
Till they inthrall themselves; I else must change
Their nature, and revoke the high decree
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
Their freedom; they themselves ordain'd their fall.
The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
Self-tempted, self-depraved: Man falls, deceived

By the other first; Man therefore shall find grace,
The other none. In mercy and justice both,
Through Heaven and Earth, so shall my glory excel,
But mercy first and last shall brightest shine.
Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd
All Heaven, and in the blessed Spirits elect
Sense of new joy ineffable diffused:
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious; in him all his Father shone
Substantially express'd; and in his face
Divine compassion visibly appear'd,
Love without end, and without measure grace,
Which uttering thus, he to his Father spake.
O Father, gracious was that word which closed
Thy sovereign sentence, that Man should find grace;
For which both Heaven and Earth shall high extol
Thy praises, with the innumerable sound
Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
Encompass'd shall resound thee ever bless'd:
For should Man finally be lost, should Man,
Thy creature late so loved, thy youngest son,
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd
With his own folly? that be from thee far,
That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
Of all things made, and judgest only right.
Or shall the Adversary thus obtain
His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil
His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought;
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to Hell
Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyself
Abolish thy creation, and unmake,
For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?
So should thy goodness and thy greatness both
Be question'd and blasphemed without defence,

Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
Freely put off, and for him lastly die
Well pleased; on me let Death wreak all his rage.
Under his gloomy power I shall not long
Lie vanquish'd; thou hast given me to possess
Life in myself for ever; by thee I live,
Though now to death I yield, and am his due
All that of me can die, yet that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
For ever with corruption there to dwell;
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue
My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil;
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
I through the ample air in triumph high
Shall lead Hell captive, maugre Hell; and show
The powers of darkness bound. Thou at the sight
Pleased, out of Heaven shalt look down, and smile;
While by thee raised I ruin all my foes,
Death last, and with his carcase glut the grave;
Then, with the multitude of my redeem'd
Shall enter Heaven long absent, and return,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain; but peace assured
And reconcilement; wrath shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire.
His words here ended, but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love
To mortal men, above which only shone
Filial obedience: as a sacrifice
Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will
Of his great Father. Admiration seized
All Heaven, what this might mean, and whither tend
Wondering; but soon the Almighty thus replied.

O thou in Heaven and Earth, the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrath; O thou
My sole complacence; well thou knowest how dear
To me are all my works, nor Man the least
Though last created; that for him I spare
Thee from my bosom, and right hand, to save,
By losing thee awhile, the whole race lost.
Thou therefore whom thou only canst redeem,
Their nature also to thy nature join,
And be thyself Man among men on earth,
Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin-seed,
By wonderous birth; be thou in Adam's room
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
As in him perish all men, so in thee,
As from a second root, shall be restored
As many as are restored, without thee none.
His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit
Imputed shall absolve them who renounce
Their own both righteous, and unrighteous, deeds;
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. So man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for man, be judged, and die;
And dying rise, and rising with him raise
His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
So heavenly love shall outdo hellish hate,
Giving to death, and dying to redeem,
So dearly to redeem what hellish hate
So easily destroy'd, and still destroys
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
Because thou hast, tho' throned in highest bliss
Equal to God, and equally enjoying
God-like fruition, quitted all, to save
A world from utter loss, and hast been found
By merit more than birth-right Son of God;

Found worthiest to be so by being good,
Far more than great, or high; because in thee
Love hath abounded more than glory abounds;
Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
With thee thy manhood also to this throne;
Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign
Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
Anointed universal king; all power
I give thee, reign for ever, and assume
Thy merits; under thee, as head supreme
Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions I reduce:
All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
In Heaven, or Earth, or under Earth in Hell,
When thou, attended gloriously from Heaven,
Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
Thy summoning Archangels to proclaim
Thy dread tribunal; forthwith from all winds
The living, and forthwith the cited dead
Of all past ages, to the general doom
Shall hasten, such a peal shall rouse their sleep;
Then all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge
Bad men, and angels; they arraign'd shall sink
Beneath thy sentence; Hell, her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Meanwhile
The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New Heaven and earth, wherein the just shall dwell;
And after all their tribulations long
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth;
Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,
For regal sceptre then no more shall need;
God shall be All in all. But, all ye Gods,
Adore him, who to compass all this dies;
Adore the Son, and honour him as me.
No sooner had the Almighty ceased, but all
The multitude of angels with a shout,

Loud, as from numbers without number; sweet,
As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heaven rung
With jubilee, and loud hosannahs fill'd
The eternal regions. Lowly reverent
Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground
With solemn adoration down they cast
Their crowns, inwove with amarant, and gold,
Immortal amarant; a flower which once
In Paradise fast by the Tree of Life
Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence
To Heaven removed, where first it grew, there grows,
And flowers aloft shading the fount of life;
And where the river of bliss through midst of Heaven
Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream;
With these, that never fade, the Spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks, inwreath'd with beams;
Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
Impurpled with celestial roses smiled.
Then crown'd again, their golden harps they took;
Harps ever tuned, that glittering by their side
Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
Of charming symphony they introduce
Their sacred song, and waken raptures high,
No voice exempt; no voice but well could join
Melodious part, such concord is in Heaven.
Thee Father first they sung, Omnipotent,
Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
Eternal King; thee Author of all Being,
Fountain of light, thyself invisible
Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitst
Throned inaccessible, but when thou shadest
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
Dark with excessive bright, thy skirts appear,
Yet dazzle Heaven, that brightest Seraphim

Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
Thee next they sung of all creation first,
Begotten Son, Divine Similitude;
In whose conspicuous countenance without cloud
Made visible, the Almighty Father shines,
Whom else no creature can behold; on thee
Impress'd the effulgence of his glory abides,
Transfused on thee his ample Spirit rests.
He Heaven of Heavens and all the powers therein
By thee created, and by thee threw down
The aspiring Dominations: thou that day
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming chariot wheels, that shook
Heaven's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks
Thou drovest of warring Angels disarray'd.
Back from pursuit thy Powers with loud acclaim
Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes,
Not so on man; him through their malice fallen,
Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
So strictly, but much more to pity incline:
No sooner did thy dear and only Son
Perceive thee purposed not to doom frail Man
So strictly, but much more to pity inclined,
He to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of mercy and justice in thy face discern'd,
Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
Second to thee, offer'd himself to die
For Man's offence. O unexampled love,
Love no where to be found less than divine!
Hail Son of God, Saviour of Men! Thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my song
Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.
Thus they in Heaven, above the starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.

Meanwhile upon the firm opacous globe
Of this round world, whose first convex divides
The luminous inferior orbs, inclosed
From Chaos and the inroad of darkness old,
Satan alighted walks: a globe far off
It seem'd, now seems a boundless continent,
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of night
Starless exposed, and ever-threatening storms
Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky;
Save on that side which from the wall of Heaven
Though distant far some small reflection gains
Of glimmering air less vex'd with tempest loud:
Here walk'd the Fiend at large in spacious field.
As when a vulture on Imaus bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey
To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids
On hills where flocks are fed, flies toward the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;
But in his way lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
With sails and wind their canny waggons light:
So on this windy sea of land, the Fiend
Walk'd up and down alone bent on his prey,—
Alone, for other creature in this place
Living or lifeless to be found was none,
None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
Up hither like aërial vapours flew
Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
With vanity had fill'd the works of men:
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,
Or happiness in this or the other life;
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
Nought seeking but the praise of men, here find

Fit retribution, empty as their deeds;
All the unaccomplish'd works of Nature's hand,
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
Dissolved on Earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
Till final dissolution, wander here,
Not in the neighbouring Moon, as some have dream'd;
Those argent fields more likely habitants,
Translated Saints or middle Spirits hold
Betwixt the Angelical and Human kind:
Hither of ill-join'd Sons and Daughters born
First from the ancient world those Giants came
With many a vain exploit, tho' then renown'd:
The builders next of Babel on the plain
Of Sennaar, and still with vain design
New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:
Others came single; he who to be deem'd
A god, leap'd fondly into Etna flames,
Empedocles; and he who to enjoy
Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea,
Cleombrotus, and many more too long,
Embryos and Idiots, Eremites and Friars
White, black, and grey, with all their trumpery.
Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek
In Golgotha him dead, who lives in Heaven,
And they who to be sure of Paradise
Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised;
They pass the Planets seven, and pass the fix'd,
And that crystalline sphere whose balance weighs
The trepidation talk'd, and that first moved;
And now Saint Peter at Heaven's wicket seems
To wait them with his keys, and now at foot
Of Heaven's ascent they lift their feet, when lo
A violent cross wind from either coast
Blows them traverse ten thousand leagues awry
Into the devious air; then might ye see

* This speech is uttered is unaccountably in Paradise of the description

Cowls, hoods and habits with their wearers tost
And flutter'd into rags; then relics, beads,
Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
The sport of winds: all these upwhirl'd aloft
Fly o'er the backside of the world far off
Into a Limbo large and broad, since call'd
The Paradise of fools, to few unknown
Long after, now unpeopled, and untrod.
All this dark globe the Fiend found as he pass'd,
And long he wander'd, till at last a gleam
Of dawning light turn'd thitherward in haste
His travell'd steps; far distant he descries,
Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of Heaven, a structure high,
At top whereof, but far more rich, appear'd
The work as of a kingly palace gate
With frontispiece of diamond and gold
Embellish'd, thick with sparkling orient gems
The portal shone, inimitable on earth
By model, or by shading pencil drawn.
The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
To Padanaram in the field of Luz,
Dreaming by night under the open sky,
And waking cried, This is the gate of Heaven.
Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but drawn up to Heaven sometimes
Viewless, and underneath a bright sea flow'd
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from Earth, sailing arrived,
Wafted by Angels, or flew o'er the Lake
Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
The Fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss;

Direct against which open'd from beneath,
Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to the Earth, a passage wide,
Wider by far than that of after times
Over mount Sion, and, though that were large,
Over the Promised Land to God so dear,
By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
On high behests his Angels to and fro
Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard
From Paneas the fount of Jordan's flood
To Bëersaba, where the Holy Land
Borders on Egypt and the Arabian shore;
So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set
To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
Satan from hence now on the lower stair
That scaled by steps of gold to Heaven gate
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this world at once. As when a scout
Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
All night; at last by break of cheerful dawn
Obtains the brow of some high climbing hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some foreign land
First seen, or some renown'd metropolis
With glistering spires and pinnacles adorn'd,
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams:
Such wonder seized, though after Heaven seen,
The Spirit malign, but much more envy seized
At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
Round he surveys, and well might, where he stood
So high above the circling canopy
Of Night's extended shade; from eastern point
Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
Beyond the horizon; then from pole to pole
He views in breadth, and without longer pause

Downright into the world's first region throws
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
Through the pure marble air his oblique way
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds;
Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens famed of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves and flowery vales,
Thrice happy isles, but who dwelt happy there
He staid not to inquire; above them all
The golden Sun, in splendour likest Heaven,
Allured his eye: thither his course he bends
Through the calm firmament; but up or down,
By centre, or eccentric, hard to tell,
Or longitude, where the great luminary
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
Dispenses light from far; they, as they move
Their starry dance, in numbers that compute
Days, months, and years, towards his all-cheering lamp
Turn swift their various motions, or are turn'd
By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
The Universe, and to each inward part
With gentle penetration, though unseen,
Shoots invisible virtue even to the deep:
So wonderously was set his station bright.
There lands the Fiend, a spot like which perhaps
Astronomer in the Sun's lucent orb,
Through his glazed optic tube, yet never saw.
The place he found beyond expression bright,
Compared with ought on Earth, metal or stone;
Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire;
If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear;
If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
Ruby, or topaz, to the twelve that shone

In Aaron's breast-plate, and a stone besides
Imagined rather oft than elsewhere seen,
That stone, or like to that which here below
Philosophers in vain so long have sought,
In vain, though by their powerful art they bind
Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound
In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
Drain'd through a limbec to his native form.
What wonder then if fields and regions here
Breathe forth Elixir pure, and rivers run
Portable gold, when with one virtuous touch
The arch-chemic Sun, so far from us remote,
Produces with terrestrial humour mix'd,
Here in the dark so many precious things
Of colour glorious and effect so rare?
Here matter new to gaze the Devil met
Undazzled, far and wide his eye commands,
For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,
But all sunshine, as when his beams at noon
Culminate from the Equator, as they now
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
Shadow from body opaque can fall; and the air,
No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray
To objects distant far, whereby he soon
Saw within ken a glorious Angel stand,
The same whom John saw also in the Sun:
His back was turn'd, but not his brightness hid;
Of beaming sunny rays, a golden tiar
Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
Illustrious on his shoulders fledged with wings
Lay waving round; on some great charge employ'd
He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.
Glad was the Spirit impure, as now in hope
To find who might direct his wandering flight
To Paradise, the happy seat of Man,
His journey's end, and our beginning woe.

But first he casts to change his proper shape,
Which else might work him danger or delay:
And now a stripling Cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
Youth smiled celestial, and to every limb
Suitable grace diffused, so well he feign'd;
Under a coronet his flowing hair
In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore
Of many a colour'd plume sprinkled with gold;
His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
Before his decent steps a silver wand.
He drew not nigh unheard; the Angel bright,
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
Admonish'd by his ear, and straight was known
The Archangel Uriel, one of the seven
Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
Stand ready at command, and are his eyes
That run thro' all the Heavens, or down to the Earth
Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts.
Uriel, for thou of those seven Spirits that stand
In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,
The first art wont his great authentic will
Interpreter through highest Heaven to bring,
Where all his sons thy embassy attend;
And here art likeliest by supreme decree
Like honour to obtain, and as his eye
To visit oft this new creation round;
Unspeakable desire to see, and know
All these his wonderous works, but chiefly Man,
His chief delight and favour: him for whom
All these his works so wonderous he ordain'd,
Hath brought me from the quires of Cherubim
Alone thus wandering. Brightest Seraph tell
In which of all these shining orbs hath Man
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,

But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell;
That I may find him, and with secret gaze,
Or open admiration, him behold
On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd:
That both in him and all things, as is meet,
The universal Maker we may praise;
Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes
To deepest Hell, and to repair that loss
Created this new happy race of Men
To serve him better: wise are all his ways.
So spake the false dissembler unperceived;
For neither Man nor Angel can discern
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone,
By his permissive will, thro' Heaven and Earth:
And oft though Wisdom wake, Suspicion sleeps
At Wisdom's gate, and to Simplicity
Resigns her charge, while Goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems: which now for once beguiled
Uriel, though regent of the Sun, and held
The sharpest-sighted Spirit of all in Heaven;
Who to the fraudulent Impostor foul
In his uprightness answer thus return'd.
Fair Angel, thy desire which tends to know
The works of God, thereby to glorify
The great Work-master, leads to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps,
Contented with report, hear only in Heaven:
For wonderful indeed are all his works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance always with delight;
But what created mind can comprehend

Their number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep.
I saw when at his word the formless mass,
This world's material mould, came to a heap:
Confusion heard his voice, and wild Uproar
Stood ruled, stood vast infinitude confined;
Till at his second bidding Darkness fled,
Light shone, and Order from Disorder sprung:
Swift to their several quarters hasted then
The cumberous elements, Earth, Flood, Air, Fire,
And this etherial quintessence of Heaven
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
Each had his place appointed, each his course,
The rest in circuit walls this universe.
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
With light from hence, tho' but reflected, shines;
That place is Earth, the seat of Man, that light
His day, which else as the other hemisphere
Night would invade, but there the neighbouring Moon
(So call that opposite fair star) her aid
Timely interposes, and her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing through mid Heaven,
With borrow'd light her countenance triform
Hence fills and empties to enlighten the Earth,
And in her pale dominion checks the night.
That spot to which I point is Paradise,
Adam's abode; those lofty shades his bower.
Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires.
Thus said, he turn'd, and Satan bowing low,
As to superior Spirits is wont in Heaven,
Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
Took leave, and toward the coast of Earth beneath,
Down from the ecliptic, sped with hoped success,

Throws his steep flight in many an airy wheel,
Nor staid, till on Niphates' top he lights.

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IV.

ARGUMENT.

SATAN, now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprise which he undertook alone against God and Man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions, fear, envy, and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil, journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and situation is described; overleaps the bounds; sits in the shape of a cormorant on the tree of life, as highest in the garden, to look about him. The garden described; Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve; his wonder at their excellent form and happy state, but with resolution to work their fall; overhears their discourse, thence gathers that the tree of knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under penalty of death; and thereon intends to found his temptation, by seducing them to transgress: then leaves them awhile, to know further of their state by some other means. Meanwhile Uriel, descending on a sun-beam, warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil Spirit had escaped the deep, and passed at noon by his sphere, in the shape of a good Angel, down to Paradise, discovered after by his furious gestures in the mount. Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest: their bower described; their evening worship. Gabriel, drawing forth his bands of night-watch to walk the round of Paradise, appoints two strong Angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil Spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping: there they find him at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers; prepares resistance; but, hindered by a sign from Heaven, flies out of Paradise.

A friend of mine says this Book has the finest opening of any - the point of time is exceedingly critical - 85 the wax is melted, the seal is about to be applied - and Milton breaks out "O for that warning voice" &c
There is moreover an opportunity for a Grand exercise of Tenderness - the opportunity is not lost. Nothing can be higher - nothing is more than Sublime -

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IV.

O FOR that warning voice, which he who saw
The Apocalypse heard cry in Heaven aloud,
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be revenged on men,
"Woe to the inhabitants on earth!" that now,
While time was, our first parents had been warn'd
The coming of their secret foe, and 'scaped,
Haply so 'scaped his mortal snare: for now
Satan, now first inflamed with rage, came down,
The tempter ere the accuser of mankind,
To wreck on innocent frail man his loss
Of that first battle, and his flight to Hell:
Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
Begins his dire attempt, which, nigh the birth,
Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,
And like a devilish engine back recoils
Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
The Hell within him; for within him Hell
He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell
One step no more than from himself can fly

By change of place: now conscience wakes despair
That slumber'd, wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be
Worse; of worse deeds worse suffering must ensue.
Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view
Lay pleasant, his grieved look he fixes sad;
Sometimes towards Heaven, and the full blazing sun,
Which now sat high in his meridian tower:
Then, much revolving, thus in sighs began.

O Thou, that with surpassing glory crown'd
Lookst from thy sole dominion like the God
Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminish'd heads; to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
That bring to my remembrance from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down,
Warring in Heaven against Heaven's matchless King:
Ah, wherefore! he deserved no such return
From me, whom he created what I was
In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.
What could be less than to afford him praise,
The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
How due! yet all his good proved ill in me,
And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
I 'sdein'd subjection, and thought one step higher
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burdensome still paying, still to owe;
Forgetful what from him I still received,
And understood not that a grateful mind
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharged: what burden then?
O had his powerful destiny ordain'd

Me some inferior Angel, I had stood
Then happy; no unbounded hope had raised
Ambition. Yet why not? some other Power
As great might have aspired, and me, though mean,
Drawn to his part; but other Powers as great
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
Or from without, to all temptations arm'd.
Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand?
Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,
But Heaven's free love dealt equally to all?
Be then his love accursed, since love or hate,
To me alike, it deals eternal woe.
Nay, cursed be thou; since against his thy will
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
Me miserable! which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell;
And in the lowest deep, a lower deep
Still threatening to devour me opens wide,
To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven.
O then at last relent: is there no place
Left for repentance, none for pardon left?
None left but by submission; and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduced
With other promises and other vaunts
Than to submit, boasting I could subdue
The Omnipotent. Ay me, they little know
How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
Under what torments inwardly I groan,
While they adore me on the throne of Hell.
With diadem and sceptre high advanced,
The lower still I fall, only supreme
In misery; such joy ambition finds.
But say I could repent, and could obtain
By act of grace my former state; how soon

Would height recall high thoughts, how soon unsay
What feign'd submission swore! ease would recant
Vows made in pain, as violent and void.
For never can true reconcilement grow,
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep;
Which would but lead me to a worse relapse
And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
Short intermission bought with double smart.
This knows my punisher; therefore as far
From granting he, as I from begging peace:
All hope excluded thus, behold in stead
Of us, outcast, exiled, his new delight,
Mankind created, and for him this world.
So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear,
Farewell remorse: all good to me is lost;
Evil be thou my good; by thee at least
Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold,
By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
As Man ere long, and this new world, shall know.
Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face,
Thrice changed with pale, ire, envy, and despair;
Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld:
For heavenly minds from such distempers foul
Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,
Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calm,
Artificer of fraud; and was the first
That practised falsehood under saintly show,
Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge:
Yet not enough had practised to deceive
Uriel once warn'd; whose eye pursued him down
The way he went, and on the Assyrian mount
Saw him disfigured more than could befall
Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
He mark'd and mad demeanour, then alone,
As he supposed, all unobserved, unseen.

So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her inclosure green,
As with a rural mound, the champaign head
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access denied, and over-head up-grew
Insuperable height of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A sylvan scene; and, as the ranks ascend,
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
The verdurous wall of Paradise up-sprung:
Which to our general sire gave prospect large
Into his nether empire neighbouring round.
And higher than that wall a circling row
Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
Appear'd, with gay enamell'd colours mix'd;
On which the sun more glad impress'd his beams
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
When God hath shower'd the earth; so lovely seem'd
That landscape: and of pure, now purer air
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All sadness but despair: Now gentle gales
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
Mozambique, off at sea north-east winds blow
Sabean odours from the spicy shore
Of Araby the blest; with such delay [league
Well pleased they slack their course, and many a
Cheer'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles:
So entertain'd those odorous sweets the Fiend,

Who came their bane; though with them better pleased
Than Asmodëus with the fishy fume
That drove him, though enamour'd, from the spouse
Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent
From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.
Now to the ascent of that steep savage hill
Satan had journeyed on, pensive and slow;
But further way found none, so thick entwined,
As one continued brake, the undergrowth
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd
All path of man or beast that pass'd that way:
One gate there only was, and that look'd east
On the other side; which when the arch-felon saw,
Due entrance he disdain'd; and, in contempt,
At one slight bound high overleap'd all bound
Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold;
Or as a thief bent to unhoard the cash
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
Cross barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault,
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles;
So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;
So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.
Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,
The middle tree and highest there that grew,
Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life
Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death
To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant, but only used
For prospect, what well used had been the pledge
Of immortality. So little knows
Any, but God alone, to value right

The good before him, but perverts best things
To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
Beneath him with new wonder now he views,
To all delight of human sense exposed,
In narrow room, Nature's whole wealth, yea more,
A Heaven on Earth: for blissful Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in the east
Of Eden planted: Eden stretch'd her line
From Auran eastward to the royal towers
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,
Or where the sons of Eden long before
Dwelt in Telassar; in this pleasant soil
His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd;
Out of the fertile ground he caused to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
And all amid them stood the tree of life,
High, eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold; and next to life,
Our death, the tree of knowledge, grew fast by,
Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
Southward through Eden went a river large,
Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill
Pass'd underneath ingulph'd; for God had thrown
That mountain as his garden-mould high raised
Upon the rapid current, which through veins
Of porous earth, with kindly thirst up-drawn,
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
Water'd the garden; thence united fell
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
Which from his darksome passage now appears,
And now divided into four main streams,
Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm
And country, whereof here needs no account;
But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,
How from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,

With mazy error under pendant shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art
In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon
Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierced shade
Imbrown'd the noontide bowers: Thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various view;
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,
Others whose fruit, burnish'd with golden rind,
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true,
If true, here only, and of delicious taste;
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interposed,
Or palmy hillock; or the flowery lap
Of some irriguous valley spread her store,
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose:
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant; meanwhile murmuring waters fall
Down the slope hills, dispersed, or in a lake,
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance
Led on the eternal spring. Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis
Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world; nor that sweet grove
Of Daphne by Orontes, and the inspired
Castalian spring, might with this Paradise

Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian isle,
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
Whom Gentiles Ammon call, and Lybian Jove,
Hid Amalthea and her florid son
Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye;
Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard,
Mount Amara, though this by some supposed
True Paradise under the Ethiop line
By Nilus' head, inclosed with shining rock,
A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
From this Assyrian garden, where the fiend
Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
Of living creatures, new to sight and strange.
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
Godlike erect, with native honour clad,
In naked majesty seem'd lords of all;
And worthy seem'd; for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,
(Severe, but in true filial freedom placed),
Whence true authority in men; though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd;
For contemplation he and valour form'd,
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him.
His fair large front and eye sublime declared
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
She, as a veil, down to the slender waist
Her unadorned golden tresses wore
Dishevell'd, but in wanton ringlets waved
As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied
Subjection, but required with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best received,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,

And sweet reluctant, amorous delay.
Nor those mysterious parts were then conceal'd;
Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame
Of Nature's works, honour dishonourable:
Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind
With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
And banish'd from man's life his happiest life,
Simplicity and spotless innocence!
So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
Of God or Angel, for they thought no ill:
So hand in hand they pass'd, the loveliest pair
That ever since in love's embraces met;
Adam the goodliest man of men since born
His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.
Under a tuft of shade that on a green
Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain side
They sat them down: and, after no more toil
Of their sweet gardening labour than sufficed
To recommend cool Zephyr, and made ease
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite
More grateful, to their supper-fruits they fell,
Nectarine fruits, which the compliant boughs
Yielded them, sidelong as they sat recline
On the soft downy bank damask'd with flowers:
The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind,
Still as they thirsted, scoop the brimming stream;
Nor gentle purpose nor endearing smiles
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as beseems
Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,
Alone as they. About them frisking play'd
All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all chase,
In wood or wilderness, forest or den;
Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
Gambol'd before them; the unwieldy elephant,
To make them mirth, used all his might, and wreathed

His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly,
Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
His braided train, and of his fatal guile
Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass
Couch'd, and, now fill'd with pasture, gazing sat,
Or bedward ruminating; for the sun
Declined, was hasting now with prone career
To the ocean isles, and in the ascending scale
Of Heaven the stars that usher evening rose:
When Satan, still in gaze as first he stood,
Scarce thus at length fail'd speech recover'd sad.

O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!
Into our room of bliss thus high advanced
Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps,
Not Spirits, yet to heavenly Spirits bright
Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
In them divine resemblance, and such grace
The hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd.
Ah, gentle pair, ye little think how nigh
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish and deliver ye to woe;
More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;
Happy, but for so happy ill secured
Long to continue, and this high seat your Heaven
Ill fenced for Heaven to keep out such a foe
As now is enter'd; yet no purposed foe
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
Though I unpitied: League with you I seek,
And mutual amity, so strait, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth; my dwelling haply may not please,
Like this fair Paradise, your sense; yet such
Accept your Maker's work; he gave it me,
Which I as freely give; Hell shall unfold,
To entertain you two, her widest gates,

And send forth all her kings: there will be room,
Not like these narrow limits, to receive
Your numerous offspring; if no better place,
Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge,
On you who wrong me not, for him who wrong'd.
And should I at your harmless innocence
Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
Honour and empire with revenge enlarged,
By conquering this new world, compels me now
To do what else, though damn'd, I should abhor.
So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds.
Then from his lofty stand on that high tree
Down he alights among the sportful herd
Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
Now other, as their shape served best his end
Nearer to view his prey, and unespied
To mark what of their state he more might learn
By word or action mark'd: About them round
A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;
Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spied
In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
Strait couches close, then, rising, changes oft
His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
Whence rushing he might surest seize them both,
Griped in each paw: when Adam, first of men,
To first of women, Eve, thus moving speech,
Turn'd him, all ear to hear new utterance flow.
Sole partner, and sole part, of all these joys,
Dearer thyself than all; needs must the Power
That made us, and for us this ample world,
Be infinitely good, and of his good
As liberal and free as infinite;
That raised us from the dust, and placed us here
In all this happiness, who at his hand
Have nothing merited, nor can perform

Ought whereof he hath need: He, who requires
From us no other service than to keep
This one, this easy charge, of all the trees
In Paradise, that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taste that only Tree
Of Knowledge, planted by the Tree of Life:
So near grows death to life, whate'er death is;
Some dreadful thing, no doubt; for well thou knowst
God hath pronounced it death to taste that tree,
The only sign of our obedience left,
Among so many signs of power, and rule,
Conferr'd upon us; and dominion given
Over all other creatures that possess
Earth, air, and sea. Then, let us not think hard
One easy prohibition, who enjoy
Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
Unlimited of manifold delights:
But let us ever praise him, and extol
His bounty, following our delightful task,
To prune these growing plants, and tend these flowers;
Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.
To whom thus Eve replied. O thou, for whom,
And from whom I was form'd; flesh of thy flesh,
And without whom am to no end; my guide,
And head: what thou hast said is just, and right.
For, we to him indeed all priases owe,
And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
Pre-eminent by so much odds; while thou
Like consort to thyself canst no where find.
That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awaked, and found myself reposed
Under a shade, on flowers; much wondering where,
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
Not distant far from thence, a murmuring sound
Of waters issued from a cave, and spread

Into a liquid plain, then stood unmoved,
Pure as the expanse of Heaven: I thither went,
With unexperienced thought, and laid me down
On the green bank, to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.
As I bent down to look, just opposite
A shape within the watery gleam appear'd,
Bending to look on me; I started back:
It started back: but pleased I soon return'd;
Pleased it return'd as soon, with answering looks
Of sympathy, and love: there I had fix'd
Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warn'd me, "What thou seest,
"What there thou seest, fair Creature, is thyself;
"With thee it came, and goes: but follow me,
"And I will bring thee where no shadow stays
"Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he
"Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy
"Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
"Multitudes like thyself, and thence be call'd
"Mother of human race." What could I do,
But follow strait, invisibly thus led,
Till I espied thee? fair indeed, and tall,
Under a platane; yet, methought, less fair,
Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
Than that smooth watery image; back I turn'd;
Thou following criedst aloud, Return, fair Eve,
Whom fliest thou? whom thou fliest, of him thou art,
His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent
Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,
Substantial life, to have thee by my side
Henceforth an individual solace dear;
Part of my soul, I seek thee; and thee claim,
My other half!——With that, thy gentle hand
Seized mine; I yielded, and from that time see

How beauty is excell'd by manly grace,
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.
So spake our general Mother; and with eyes
Of conjugal attraction unreproved,
And meek surrender, half embracing lean'd
On our first Father: half her swelling breast
Naked met his, under the flowing gold
Of her loose tresses hid; he in delight
Both of her beauty, and submissive charms,
Smiled with superior love; as Jupiter
On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds,
That shed May flowers, and press'd her matron lip
With kisses pure:—aside the devil turn'd
For envy, yet with jealous leer malign
Eyed them askance; and to himself thus plain'd.
Sight hateful, sight tormenting; thus these two,
Imparadised in one another's arms,
(The happier Eden), shall enjoy their fill
Of bliss on bliss: while I to Hell am thrust,
Where neither joy, nor love, but fierce desire,
Amongst our other torments not the least,
Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing, pines.
Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd
From their own mouths; all is not theirs, it seems:
One fatal Tree there stands, of Knowledge call'd,
Forbidden them to taste. Knowledge forbidden?
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
Envy them that? can it be sin to know?
Can it be death? and do they only stand
By ignorance? Is that their happy state,
The proof of their obedience, and their faith?
O fair foundation laid whereon to build
Their ruin; hence I will excite their minds
With more desire to know, and to reject
Envious commands, invented with design
To keep them low, whom knowledge might exalt

Equal with Gods; aspiring to be such,
They taste, and die; what likelier can ensue?
But first, with narrow search I must walk round
This garden, and no corner leave unspied;
A chance, but chance may lead where I may meet
Some wandering Spirit of Heaven, by fountain-side,
Or in thick shade retired, from him to draw
What further would be learn'd. Live while ye may,
Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures; for, long woes are to succeed.
So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
But with sly circumspection; and began,
Thro' wood, thro' waste, o'er hill, o'er dale his roam.
Meanwhile in utmost longitude, where Heaven
With Earth and Ocean meets, the setting sun
Slowly descended; and with right aspect
Against the eastern gate of Paradise
Levell'd his evening rays; it was a rock
Of alabaster, piled up to the clouds,
Conspicuous far; winding with one ascent,
Accessible from Earth, one entrance high:
The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
Chief of the Angelic guards, awaiting night:
About him exercised heroic games
The unarmed youth of Heaven; but nigh at hand
Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
Hung high, with diamond flaming, and with gold.
Thither came Uriel gliding through the even
On a sun-beam, swift as a shooting star
In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fired
Impress the air, and shew the mariner
From what point of his Compass to beware
Impetuous winds; he thus began in haste.

Gabriel! to thee thy course by lot hath given
Charge, and strict watch, that to this happy place
No evil thing approach, or enter in;
This day, at height of noon, came to my sphere
A Spirit; zealous, as he seem'd, to know
More of the Almighty's work; and chiefly Man,
God's latest image: I described his way,
Bent all on speed, and mark'd his airy gait:
But, in the mount that lies from Eden north,
Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks
Alien from Heaven, with passions foul obscured;
Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade
Lost sight of him: one of the banish'd crew,
I fear, hath ventured from the deep, to raise
New troubles; him thy care must be to find.
To whom the winged warrior thus return'd.
Uriel! no wonder if thy perfect sight,
Amid the sun's bright circle, where thou sitst,
See far, and wide: in at this gate none pass
The vigilance here placed, but such as come
Well known from Heaven; and since meridian hour
No creature thence. If Spirit of other sort
So minded, have o'erleap'd these earthy bounds
On purpose, hard thou knowst it to exclude
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.
But, if within the circuit of these walks,
In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
Thou tellst, by morrow dawning I shall know.
So promised he; and Uriel to his charge
Return'd, on that bright beam, whose point now raised
Bore him slope downward to the sun, now fallen
Beneath the Azores; whether the prime orb,
Incredible how swift, had thither rowled
Diurnal; or this less voluble Earth,
By shorter flight to the east, had left him there,

Arraying with reflected purple, and gold,
The clouds that on his western throne attend.
Now came still evening on, and twilight grey
Had in her sober livery all things clad:
Silence accompanied; for beast, and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests,
Were slunk; all but the wakeful nightingale;
She all night long her amorous descant sung;
Silence was pleased: now glow'd the firmament
With living Sapphires; Hesperus that led
The starry host, rod brightest; till the moon,
Rising in clouded majesty at length,
Apparent Queen, unveil'd her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw;
When Adam thus to Eve: Fair Consort! the hour
Of night, and all things now retired to rest,
Mind us of like repose; since God hath set
Labour and rest, as day and night, to men
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep,
Now falling with soft slumbrous weight, inclines
Our eyelids. Other creatures all day long
Rove idle, unemploy'd, and less need rest:
Man hath his daily work of body, or mind,
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of Heaven on all his ways;
While other animals unactive range,
And of their doings God takes no account.
To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
With first approach of light, we must be risen,
And at our pleasant labour, to reform
Yon flowery arbours, yonder alleys green,
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
That mock our scant manuring, and require
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth.
Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums,
That lie bestrown, unsightly, and unsmooth,

Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;
Meanwhile, as nature wills, night bids us rest.
To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorn'd.
My Author, and Disposer! what thou bidst
Unargued I obey; so God ordains:
God is thy law, thou mine; to know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise.
With thee conversing I forget all time;
All seasons, and their change, all please alike:
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glistering with dew; fragrant the fertile Earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild: then, silent Night,
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of Heaven, her starry train.
But neither breath of morn, when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds: nor rising sun
On this delightful land: nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glistering with dew; nor fragrance after showers;
Nor grateful evening mild: nor silent Night,
With this her solemn bird; nor walk by moon,
Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet.
But wherefore all night long shine these? For whom
This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?
To whom our general Ancestor replied.
Daughter of God and Man, accomplish'd Eve!
These have their course to finish, round the earth,
By morrow evening; and from land to land
In order, though to nations yet unborn,
Ministering light prepared, they set, and rise:
Lest total darkness should by night regain
Her old possession, and extinguish life
In nature, and all things; which these soft fires

Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat,
Of various influence, foment, and warm,
Temper, or nourish; or in part shed down
Their stellar virtue, on all kinds that grow
On Earth, made hereby apter to receive
Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.
These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,
Shine not in vain; nor think, though men were none,
That Heaven would want spectators, God want praise:
Millions of Spiritual Creatures walk the Earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep;
All these, with ceaseless praise, his works behold
Both day and night: How often, from the steep
Of echoing hill, or thicket, have we heard
Celestial voices, to the midnight air
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
Singing their great Creator? oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds,
In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven.
Thus talking, hand in hand, along they pass'd
On to their blissful bower; it was a place
Chosen by the Sovereign Planter, when he framed
All things to Man's delightful use; the roof,
Of thickest covert, was inwoven shade,
Laurel, and myrtle, and what higher grew,
Of firm, and fragrant leaf: on either side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
Fenced up the verdant wall, each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin
Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought
Mosaic: under foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broider'd the ground, more colour'd, than with stone
Of costliest emblem: Other creature here,

Bird, beast, insect, or worm, durst enter none;
Such was their awe of man! In shadier bower
More sacred, and sequester'd, though but feign'd,
Pan, or Sylvanus, never slept; nor nymph,
Nor Faunus, haunted. Here, in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed:
And heavenly quires the hymenæan sung,
What day the genial angel to our sire
Brought her, in naked beauty more adorn'd,
More lovely, than Pandora; whom the Gods
Endow'd with all their gifts, and O, too like
In sad event! when to the unwiser son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she insnared
Mankind with her fair looks, to be avenged
On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.
Thus at their shady lodge arrived, both stood,
Both turn'd, and under open sky adored
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven,
Which they beheld; the moon's resplendent globe,
And starry pole: Thou also madest the night,
Maker Omnipotent! and thou the day,
Which we, in our appointed work employ'd,
Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help,
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
Ordain'd by thee; and this delicious place,
For us too large; where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropp'd falls to the ground.
But thou hast promised from us two a race
To fill the Earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.
This said unanimous, and other rites
Observing none, but adoration pure,
Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
Handed they went; and, eased the putting off

These troublesome disguises which we wear,
Strait side by side were laid: nor turn'd, I ween,
Adam from his fair spouse; nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refused;
Whatever hypocrites austerely talk
Of purity, and place, and innocence;
Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure; and commands to some, leaves free to all.
Our Maker bids increase; who bids abstain,
But our destroyer, foe to God, and Man?
Hail wedded love! mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise! of all things common else.
By thee adulterous lust was driven from men,
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee,
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of Father, Son, and Brother, first were known.
Far be it, that I should write thee sin, or blame!
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place;
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets!
Whose bed is undefiled and chaste pronounced,
Present, or past; as saints, and patriarchs used.
Here, love his golden shafts employs; here lights
His constant lamp; and waves his purple wings;
Reigns here, and revels: not in the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendear'd;
Casual fruition! nor in court amours,
Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
Or serenate, which the starved lover sings
To his proud fair; best quitted with disdain.
These lull'd by nightingales, embracing slept;
And on their naked limbs the flowery roof
Shower'd roses, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on.
Blest pair! and O! yet happiest, if ye seek
No happier state, and know to know no more.

Now had night measured, with her shadowy cone,
Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault:
And from their ivory port the Cherubim
Forth issuing at the accustom'd hour, stood arm'd
To their night watches in warlike parade,
When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake.
Uzziel! half these draw off, and coast the south
With strictest watch; these other wheel the north;
Our circuit meets full west. As flame they part,
Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.
From these, two strong and subtle Spirits he call'd,
That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge.
Ithuriel, and Zephon; with wing'd speed
Search thro' this garden, leave unsearch'd no nook;
But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge,
Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.
This evening from the sun's decline arrived,
Who tells of some infernal Spirit seen
Hitherward bent, who could have thought? escaped
The bars of Hell; on errand bad, no doubt:
Such, where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.
So saying, on he led his radiant files,
Dazzling the moon; these to the bower direct,
In search of whom they sought: him there they found,
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve;
Assaying, by his devilish art, to reach
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
Illusions, as he list, phantasms, and dreams:
Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
The animal Spirits, that from pure blood arise,
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure; thence raise
At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts;
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits ingendering pride.
Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear
Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can endure

Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to its own likeness: up he starts,
Discover'd, and surprised. As when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid
Fit for the tun, some magazine to store
Against a rumour'd war, the smutty grain
With sudden blaze diffused, inflames the air:
So started up, in his own shape, the Fiend.
Back stepp'd those two fair angels, half amazed,
So sudden to behold the grisly king;
Yet thus, unmoved with fear, accost him soon.
Which of those rebel Spirits, adjudged to Hell,
Comest thou, escaped thy prison? and transform'd
Why satst thou, like an enemy in wait,
Here watching at the head of these that sleep?
Know ye not then, said Satan, fill'd with scorn,
Know ye not me? ye knew me once no mate
For you; there sitting where ye durst not soar:
Not to know me argues yourselves unknown,
The lowest of your throng; or if ye know,
Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
Your message, like to end as much in vain?
To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with scorn.
Think not, revolted Spirit! thy shape the same,
Or undiminish'd brightness, to be known
As when thou stoodst in Heaven, upright, and pure;
That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee; and thou resemblest now
Thy sin and place of doom, obscure and foul.
But come; for thou, be sure, shalt give account
To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
This place inviolable, and these from harm.
So spake the Cherub, and his grave rebuke,
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace
Invincible: abash'd the Devil stood,
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw

Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw and pined
His loss; but chiefly to find here observed
His lustre visibly impair'd: yet seem'd
Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,
Best with the best, the sender, not the sent,
Or all at once; more glory will be won,
Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,
Will save us trial what the least can do
Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.
The Fiend replied not, overcome with rage;
But like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on,
Champing his iron curb: To strive or fly
He held it vain; awe from above had quell'd
His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh
The western point, where those half-rounding guards
Just met, and closing stood in squadron join'd,
Awaiting next command. To whom their chief
Gabriel from the front thus call'd aloud.
O Friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade,
And with them comes a third of regal port,
But faded splendour wan; who, by his gait
And fierce demeanour, seems the prince of Hell,
Not likely to part hence without contest;
Stand firm, for in his look defiance lowers.
He scarce had ended, when those two approach'd,
And brief related whom they brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and posture couch'd.
To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake.
Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescribed
To thy transgressions, and disturb'd the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgress
By thy example, but have power and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place;

Your military obedience, to dissolve
Allegiance to the acknowledged Power Supreme?
And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
Patron of liberty, who more than thou
Once fawn'd, and cringed, and servilely adored
Heaven's awful Monarch? wherefore, but in hope
To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
But mark what I arreed thee now—Avaunt;
Fly thither whence thou fledst: if from this hour
Within these hallowed limits thou appear,
Back to the infernal pit I drag thee chain'd
And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
The facile gates of Hell too slightly barr'd.
So threaten'd he; but Satan to no threats
Gave heed, but, waxing more in rage, replied.
Then when I am thy captive talk of chains,
Proud limitary Cherub! but ere then
Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
From my prevailing arm, though Heaven's King
Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
Used to the yoke, drawst his triumphant wheels
In progress through the road of Heaven star-paved.
While thus he spake, the angelic squadron bright
Turn'd fiery red, sharpening in mooned horns
Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
With ported spears, as thick as when a field
Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
Sways them; the careful ploughman doubting stands,
Lest on the threshing-floor his hopeful sheaves
Prove chaff. On the other side, Satan alarm'd,
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremoved:
His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
Sat horror plumed: nor wanted in his grasp
What seem'd both spear and shield. Now dreadful [deeds

Might have ensued, nor only Paradise
In this commotion, but the starry cope
Of Heaven perhaps, or all the elements
At least, had gone to wrack, disturb'd and torn
With violence of this conflict, had not soon
The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
Hung forth in Heaven his golden scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,
Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
The pendulous round earth with balanced air
In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
Battles and realms: In these he put two weights,
The sequel each of parting and of fight:
The latter quick up-flew, and kick'd the beam;
Which Gabriel spying thus bespake the Fiend.
Satan, I know thy strength, and thou knowst mine;
Neither our own but given; what folly then
To boast what arms can do? since thine no more
Than Heaven permits, nor mine, tho' doubled now
To trample thee as mire: For proof look up,
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign,
Where thou art weigh'd, and shewn how light, how weak,
If thou resist. The Fiend look'd up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night.

END OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

ARGUMENT.

Morning approached, Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream; he likes it not, yet comforts her: They come forth to their day-labours: their morning hymn at the door of their bower. God, to render man inexcusable, sends Raphael to admonish him of his obedience, of his free estate, of his enemy near at hand, who he is, and why his enemy, and whatever else may avail Adam to know. Raphael comes down to Paradise; his appearance described; his coming discerned by Adam afar off, sitting at the door of his bower; he goes out to meet him, brings him to his lodge, entertains him with the choicest fruits of Paradise got together by Eve; their discourse at table: Raphael performs his message, minds Adam of his state, and of his enemy; relates, at Adam's request, who that enemy is, and how he came to be so, beginning from his first revolt in Heaven, and the occasion thereof; how he drew his legions after him to the parts of the north, and there incited them to rebel with him, persuading all but only Abdiel, a Seraph, who in argument dissuades and opposes him, then forsakes him.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK V.

Now morn her rosy steps in the eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam waked, so custom'd; for his sleep
Was airy light, from pure digestion bred,
And temperate vapours bland, which the only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song
Of birds on every bough; so much the more
His wonder was to find unwaken'd Eve
With tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek,
As through unquiet rest: He, on his side
Leaning half raised, with looks of cordial love,
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
Beauty, which whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then, with voice
Mild as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus. Awake,
My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,
Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight!
Awake; the morning shines, and the fresh field
Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
Our tender plants, how blows the citron grove,

What drops the myrrh, and what the balmly reed,
How nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet.
Such whispering waked her, but with startled eye
On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake.
O sole, in whom my thoughts find all repose,
My glory, my perfection! glad I see
Thy face, and morn return'd; for I this night
(Such night till this I never pass'd) have dream'd,
If dream'd, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,
Works of day past, or morrow's next design,
But of offence and trouble, which my mind
Knew never till this irksome night. Methought,
Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk
With gentle voice; I thought it thine; it said,
"Why sleepst thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,
"The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
"To the night-warbling bird, that now awake
"Tunes sweetest his love-labour'd song; now reigns
"Full orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light
"Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,
"If none regard; Heaven wakes with all his eyes,
"Whom to behold but thee, Nature's desire,
"In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
"Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze."
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not:
To find thee I directed then my walk;
And on, methought, alone I pass'd through ways
That brought me on a sudden to the tree
Of interdicted knowledge: fair it seem'd,
Much fairer to my fancy than by day;
And, as I wondering look'd, beside it stood
One shaped and wing'd like one of those from Heaven
By us oft seen; his dewy locks distill'd
Ambrosia; on that tree he also gazed;
And, "O fair plant," said he, "with fruit surcharged,

" Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,
" Nor God, nor Man? Is knowledge so despised?
" Or envy, or what reserve, forbids to taste?
" Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
" Longer thy offer'd good? why else set here?"
This said, he paused not, but with venturous arm
He pluck'd, he tasted; me damp horror chill'd
At such bold words, vouch'd with a deed so bold:
But he thus overjoy'd, " O fruit divine,
" Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt,
" Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
" For Gods, yet able to make Gods of Men:
" And why not Gods of Men, since good, the more
" Communicated, more abundant grows,
" The Author not impair'd, but honour'd more?
" Here, happy creature, fair angelic Eve,
" Partake thou also; happy though thou art,
" Happier thou mayst be, worthier canst not be.
" Taste this, and be henceforth among the Gods
" Thyself a Goddess, not to Earth confined,
" But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes
" Ascend to Heaven, by merit thine, and see
" What life the Gods live there, and such live thou."
So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
Even to my mouth of that same fruit held part
Which he had pluck'd; the pleasant savoury smell
So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought,
Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
With him I flew, and underneath beheld
The earth outstretch'd immense, a prospect wide
And various: Wondering at my flight and change
To this high exaltation; suddenly
My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
And fell asleep; but O, how glad I waked
To find this but a dream!—Thus Eve her night
Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad.

Best image of myself and dearer half,
The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep
Affects me equally; nor can I like
This uncouth dream, of evil sprung, I fear;
Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,
Created pure. But know, that in the soul
Are many lesser faculties, that serve
Reason as chief; among these Fancy next
Her office holds; of all external things,
Which the five watchful senses represent,
She forms imaginations, airy shapes,
Which Reason, joining, or disjoining, frames
All what we affirm or what deny, and call
Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
Into her private cell when nature rests.
Oft in her absence mimic Fancy wakes
To imitate her; but misjoining shapes,
Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams;
Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.
Some such resemblances, methinks, I find
Of our last evening's talk in this thy dream,
But with addition strange; yet be not sad.
Evil into the mind of God or Man
May come and go, so unapproved, and leave
No spot or blame behind: Which gives me hope,
That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream,
Waking thou never wilt consent to do.
Be not dishearten'd then, nor cloud those looks,
That wont to be more cheerful and serene
Than when fair morning first smiles on the world;
And let us to our fresh employments rise
Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers,
That open now their choicest bosom'd smells,
Reserved from night, and kept for thee in store.
So cheer'd he his fair spouse, and she was cheer'd;
But silently a gentle tear let fall

From either eye, and wiped them with her hair;
Two other precious drops that ready stood,
Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell
Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended.
So all was clear'd, and to the field they haste.
But first, from under shady arborous roof
Soon as they forth were come to open sight
Of day-spring, and the sun, who, scarce up-risen,
With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean brim,
Shot parallel to the Earth his dewy ray,
Discovering in wide landscape all the east
Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,
Lowly they bow'd adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid
In various style; for neither various style
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounced, or sung
Unmeditated; such prompt eloquence
Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse,
More tuneable than needed lute or harp
To add more sweetness; and they thus began.
These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty, thine this universal frame,
Thus wonderous fair; Thyself how wonderous then!
Unspeakable, who sitst above these Heavens
To us invisible or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.
Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,
Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in Heaven;
On Earth, join all ye Creatures to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.
Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,

If better thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crownst the smiling morn
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime.
Thou Sun, of this great world both eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater; sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when thou climbst,
And when high noon hast gain'd, and when thou fallst.
Moon, that now meetst the orient sun, now fliest,
With the fix'd stars, fix'd in their orb that flies;
And ye five other wandering fires that move
In mystic dance, not without song, resound
His praise, who out of darkness call'd up light.
Air, and ye elements, the eldest birth
Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run
Perpetual circle, multiform, and mix,
And nourish all things; let your ceaseless change
Vary to our great Maker still new praise.
Ye Mists and Exhalations, that now rise
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or grey,
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
In honour to the world's great Author rise,
Whether to deck with clouds the uncolour'd sky,
Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,
Rising or falling, still advance his praise.
His praise, ye Winds, that from four quarters blow,
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye Pines,
With every plant, in sign of worship wave.
Fountains, and ye that warble, as ye flow,
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
Join voices all ye living Souls; ye Birds,
Then singing up to Heaven gate ascend,
Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.
Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk
The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep,
Witness if I be silent, morn or even,

To hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade,
Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
Hail, universal Lord, be bounteous still
To give us only good; and, if the night
Have gather'd ought of evil or conceal'd,
Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark.
So pray'd they innocent, and to their thoughts
Firm peace recover'd soon and wonted calm.
On to their morning's rural work they haste
Among sweet dews and flowers; where any row
Of fruit-trees over-woody reach'd too far
Their pamper'd boughs, and needed hands to check
Fruitless embraces; or they led the vine
To wed her elm; she, spoused, about him twines
Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
Her dower, the adopted clusters, to adorn
His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd beheld
With pity Heaven's high King, and to him call'd
Raphael, the sociable Spirit, that deign'd
To travel with Tobias, and secured
His marriage with the seventimes wedded maid.
Raphael, said he, thou hearst what stir on Earth
Satan from Hell, 'scaped through the darksome gulf,
Hath raised in Paradise, and how disturb'd
This night the human pair; how he designs
In them at once to ruin all mankind.
Go, therefore, half this day as friend with friend
Converse with Adam, in what bower or shade
Thou findst him from the heat of noon retired,
To respite his day-labour with repast,
Or with repose; and such discourse bring on,
As may advise him of his happy state,
Happiness in his power left free to will,
Left to his own free will, his will though free,
Yet mutable; whence warn him to beware
He swerve not, to secure: Tell him withal

His danger, and from whom; what enemy,
Late fallen himself from Heaven, is plotting now
The fall of others from like state of bliss;
By violence? no, for that shall be withstood;
But by deceit and lies: this let him know
Lest wilfully transgressing he pretend
Surprisal, unadmonish'd, unforewarn'd.

So spake the eternal Father, and fulfill'd
All justice: nor delay'd the winged Saint
After his charge received; but from among
Thousand celestial Ardours, where he stood
Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, up-springing light,
Flew through the midst of Heaven: the angelic quires,
On each hand parting to his speed gave way
Through all the empyreal road; till at the gate
Of Heaven arrived, the gate self-open'd wide,
On golden hinges turning, as by work
Divine the Sovereign Architect had framed.
From hence no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
Star interposed, however small he sees,
Not unconform to other shining globes,
Earth and the garden of God, with cedars crown'd
Above all hills. As when by night the glass
Of Galileo, less assured, observes
Imagined lands and regions in the moon;
Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades,
Delos or Samos first appearing, kens
A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight
He speeds, and through the vast etherial sky
Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing,
Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan
Winnows the buxom air; till within soar
Of towering eagles, to all the fowls he seems
A Phœnix, gazed by all, as that sole bird,
When to inshrine his relics in the Sun's
Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.

At once on the eastern cliff of Paradise
He lights, and to his proper shape returns
A Seraph wing'd; six wings he wore, to shade
His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
With regal ornament: the middle pair
Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
And colours dipt in Heaven; the third his feet
Shadowed from either heel with feather'd mail,
Sky-tinctured grain. Like Maia's son he stood,
And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd
The circuit wide. Strait knew him all the bands
Of angels under watch; and to his state,
And to his message high, in honour rise;
For on some message high they guess'd him bound.
Their glittering tents he pass'd, and now is come
Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
And flowering odours, cassia, nard, and balm;
A wilderness of sweets; for Nature here
Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will
Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet
Wild above rule or art; enormous bliss.
Him through the spicy forest onward come
Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat
Of his cool bower, while now the mounted sun
Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm
Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs;
And Eve within, due at her hour prepared
For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst
Of nectarous draughts between, from milky stream,
Berry or grape; to whom thus Adam call'd.
Haste hither, Eve, and worth thy sight behold,
Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
Comes this way moving; seems another morn

Risen on mid-noon; some great behest from Heaven
To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
And what thy stores contain bring forth, and pour
Abundance, fit to honour and receive
Our heavenly stranger: Well we may afford
Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
From large bestow'd, where Nature multiplies
Her fertile growth, and by disburdening grows
More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare.
To whom thus Eve. Adam, earth's hallow'd mould,
Of God inspired! small store will serve, where store,
All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes:
But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
Each plant and juiciest gourd, will pluck such choice
To entertain our Angel-guest, as he
Beholding shall confess, that here on Earth
God hath dispensed his bounties as in Heaven.
So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste
She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
What choice to choose for delicacy best,
What order, so contrived as not to mix
Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant, but bring
Taste after taste upheld with kindliest change;
Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
Whatever Earth, all-bearing mother, yields
In India East or West, or middle shore
In Pontus or the Punic coast, or where
Alcinous reign'd, fruit of all kinds, in coat
Rough or smooth rind, or bearded husk, or shell,
She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink the grape
She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths
From many a berry; and from sweet kernels press'd

She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold
Wants her fit vessels pure; then strews the ground
With rose and odours from the shrub unfumed.
Meanwhile our primitive great Sire, to meet
His god-like guest, walks forth, without more train
Accompanied than with his own complete
Perfections: in himself was all his state,
More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
On princes, when their rich retinue long
Of horses led, and grooms besmear'd with gold,
Dazzles the crowd, and sets them all agape.
Nearer his presence Adam, though not awed,
Yet with submiss approach and reverence meek,
As to a superior nature, bowing low,
Thus said. Native of Heaven, for other place
None can than Heaven such glorious shape contain;
Since by descending from the thrones above,
Those happy places thou hast deign'd awhile
To want, and honour these, vouchsafe with us
Two only, who yet by sovereign gift possess
This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
To rest, and what the garden choicest bears
To sit and taste, till this meridian heat
Be over, and the sun more cool decline.
Whom thus the angelic Virtue answer'd mild.
Adam, I therefore came; nor art thou such
Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
As may not oft invite, though Spirits of Heaven,
To visit thee; lead on then where thy bower
O'ershades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,
I have at will. So to the sylvan lodge
They came, that like Pomona's arbour smiled
With flowerets deck'd and fragrant smells; but Eve,
Undeck'd, save with herself, more lovely fair
Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feign'd
Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,

Stood to entertain her guest from Heaven; no vail
She needed, virtue proof, no thought infirm
Alter'd her cheek, on whom the Angel hail
Bestow'd, the holy salutation used
Long after to blest Mary, second Eve.

Hail, Mother of Mankind, whose fruitful womb
Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons
Than with these various fruits the trees of God
Have heap'd this table. Raised of grassy turf
Their table was, and mossy seats had round,
And on her ample square from side to side
All Autumn piled, though Spring and Autumn here
Danced hand in hand. A while discourse they hold;
No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began
Our Author. Heavenly stranger, please to taste
These bounties which our Nourisher, from whom
All perfect good, unmeasured out, descends,
To us for food and for delight hath caused
The Earth to yield; unsavoury food perhaps
To spiritual natures; only this I know,
That one celestial Father gives to all.
To whom the Angel. Therefore what he gives
(Whose praise be ever sung) to Man in part
Spiritual, may of purest Spirits be found
No ungrateful food: and food alike those pure
Intelligential substances require
As doth your rational; and both contain
Within them every lower faculty
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste:
Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
For know, whatever was created, needs
To be sustain'd and fed; of elements
The grosser feeds the purer, Earth the Sea,
Earth and the Sea feed Air, the Air those Fires
Etherial, and as lowest first the Moon;

Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurged
Vapours not yet into her substance turn'd.
Nor doth the Moon no nourishment exhale
From her moist continent to higher orbs.
The Sun that light imparts to all, receives
From all his alimental recompence
In humid exhalations, and at even
Sups with the Ocean. Though in Heaven the trees
Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
Yield nectar; though from off the boughs each morn
We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground
Cover'd with pearly grain: yet God hath here
Varied his bounty so with new delights,
As may compare with Heaven; and to taste
Think not I shall be nice. So down they sat,
And to their viands fell, nor seemingly
The Angel, nor in mist, the common gloss
Of theologians, but with keen dispatch
Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
To transubstantiate; what redounds, transpires
Through Spirits with ease; nor wonder; if by fire
Of sooty coal the empiric alchemist
Can turn, or holds it possible to turn
Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold
As from the mine. Meanwhile at table Eve
Minister'd naked, and their flowing cups
With pleasant liquors crown'd: O innocence
Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,
Then had the Sons of God excuse to have been
Enamour'd at that sight; but in those hearts
Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy
Was understood, the injured lover's Hell.
Thus, when with meats and drinks they had sufficed,
Not burden'd Nature, sudden mind arose
In Adam, not to let the occasion pass,
Given him by this great conference, to know

Of things above his world, and of their being
Who dwell in Heaven, whose excellence he saw
Transcend his own so far; whose radiant forms,
Divine effulgence, whose high power so far
Exceeded human, and his wary speech
Thus to the empyreal minister he framed.
  Inhabitant with God, now know I well
Thy favour, in this honour done to Man,
Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsafed
To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
Food not of Angels, yet accepted so,
As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
At Heaven's high feasts to have fed: yet what com-
  To whom the winged Hierarch replied. [pare?
O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return,
If not depraved from good, created all
Such to perfection, one first matter all,
Endued with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
But more refined, more spirituous, and pure,
As nearer to him placed, or nearer tending,
Each in their several active spheres assign'd,
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
More airy, last the bright consummate flower
Spirits odorous breathes: flowers and their fruit,
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,
To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
To intellectual, give both life and sense,
Fancy and understanding; whence the soul
Reason receives, and Reason is her being,
Discursive or intuitive; discourse
Is oftest yours, the latter most is ours,
Differing but in degree, of kind the same.

Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
To proper substance: Time may come, when Men
With Angels may participate, and find
No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare:
And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
Improved by track of time, and wing'd ascend
Etherial, as we; or may at choice
Here or in heavenly Paradises dwell;
If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire
Whose progeny you are. Meanwhile enjoy
Your fill what happiness this happy state
Can comprehend, incapable of more.
To whom the Patriarch of Mankind replied.
O favourable Spirit, propitious guest,
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of Nature set
From centre to circumference, whereon
In contemplation of created things
By steps we may ascend to God. But say
What meant that caution join'd, *If ye be found*
Obedient? Can we want obedience then
To him, or possibly his love desert
Who form'd us from the dust, and placed us here
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend?
To whom the Angel. Son of Heaven and Earth,
Attend: That thou art happy, owe to God;
That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,
That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.
This was that caution given thee; be advised
God made thee perfect, not immutable;
And good he made thee, but to persevere
He left it in thy power; ordain'd thy will

By Nature free, not overruled by Fate
Inextricable, or strict necessity;
Our voluntary service he requires,
Not our necessitated, such with him
Finds no acceptance, nor can find: for how
Can hearts, not free, be tried whether they serve
Willing or no, who will but what they must
By destiny, and can no other choose?
Myself and all the angelic host that stand
In sight of God enthroned, our happy state
Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;
On other surety none; freely we serve,
Because we freely love, as in our will
To love or not; in this we stand or fall:
And some are fallen, to disobedience fallen,
And so from Heaven to deepest Hell; O fall
From what high state of bliss into what woe!
To whom our great Progenitor. Thy words
Attentive, and with more delighted ear,
Divine Instructor, I have heard, than when
Cherubic songs by night from neighbouring hills
Aërial music send: nor knew I not
To be both will and deed created free;
Yet that we never shall forget to love
Our Maker, and obey him, whose command
Single, is yet so just, my constant thoughts
Assured me, and still assure: Though what thou tellst
Hath past in Heaven, some doubt within me move,
But more desire to hear, if thou consent,
The full relation, which must needs be strange,
Worthy of sacred silence to be heard;
And we have yet large day, for scarce the Sun
Hath finish'd half his journey, and scarce begins
His other half in the great zone of Heaven.
Thus Adam made request, and Raphael,
After short pause assenting, thus began.

High matter thou enjoinst me, O prime of Men,
Sad task and hard: For how shall I relate
To human sense the invisible exploits
Of warring Spirits? How, without remorse
The ruin of so many glorious once,
And perfect while they stood? how, last, unfold
The secrets of another world, perhaps
Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good
This is dispensed, and what surmounts the reach
Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
By likening spiritual to corporal forms,
As may express them best; though what if Earth
Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein
Each to other like, more than on Earth is thought?
As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
Reign'd where these Heavens now roll, where earth now rests
Upon her centre poised; when on a day,
(For time, though in eternity, applied
To motion, measures all things durable
By present, past, and future), on such day
As Heaven's great year brings forth, the empyreal host
Of Angels by imperial summons call'd,
Innumerable before the Almighty's throne,
Forthwith from all the ends of Heaven appear'd
Under their Hierarchs in orders bright:
Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced,
Standards, and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear
Stream in the air, and for distinction serve
Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;
Or in their glittering tissues bear emblazed
Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
Recorded eminent. Thus, when in orbs
Of circuit inexpressible they stood,
Orb within orb, the Father infinite,
By whom in bliss embosom'd sat the Son

Amidst, as from a flaming mount, whose top
Brightness had made invisible, thus spake.
Hear all ye Angels, progeny of light,
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
Hear my decree, which unrevoked shall stand.
This day I have begot whom I declare
My only Son, and on this holy hill
Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
At my right hand; your head I him appoint;
And by myself have sworn to him shall bow
All knees in Heaven, and shall confess him Lord:
Under his great vicegerent reign abide
United as one individual soul
For ever happy: Him who disobeys
Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day,
Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
Into utter darkness, deep engulf'd, his place
Ordain'd without redemption, without end.
So spake the Omnipotent, and with his words
All seem'd well-pleased; all seem'd, but were not all.
That day, as other solemn days, they spent
In song and dance about the sacred hill;
Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere
Of planets, and of fix'd, in all her wheels
Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolved, yet regular
Then most, when most irregular they seem:
And in their motions harmony divine
So smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear
Listens delighted. Evening now approach'd,
(For we have also our evening and our morn,
We ours for change delectable, not need):
Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn
Desirous; all in circles as they stood,
Tables are set, and on a sudden piled
With Angels' food, and rubied nectar flows

In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heaven.
On flowers reposed, and with fresh flowerets crown'd,
They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy, secure
Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds
Excess, before the all-bounteous King, who shower'd
With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.
Now, when ambrosial night with clouds exhaled
From that high mount of God, whence light and shade
Spring both, the face of brightest Heaven had changed
To grateful twilight, (for night comes not there
In darker veil), and roseate dews disposed
All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest;
Wide over all the plain, and wider far
Than all this globous earth in plain outspread,
(Such are the courts of God), the angelic throng,
Dispersed in bands and files, their camp extend
By living streams among the trees of life.
Pavilions numberless, and sudden rear'd,
Celestial tabernacles, where they slept
Fann'd with cool winds; save those who in their course
Melodious hymns about the sovereign throne
Alternate all night long: but not so waked
Satan, (so call him now, his former name
Is heard no more in Heaven); he of the first,
If not the first Archangel, great in power,
In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
With envy against the Son of God, that day
Honour'd by his great Father, and proclaim'd
Messiah King anointed, could not bear
Through pride that sight, and thought himself impair'd.
Deep malice thence conceiving, and disdain,
Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolved
With all his legions to dislodge, and leave

Unworshipp'd, unobey'd the throne supreme,
Contemptuous; and his next subordinate
Awakening, thus to him in secret spake.
Sleepst thou, Companion dear; what sleep can close
Thy eyelids? and rememberest what decree
Of yesterday, so late hath pass'd the lips
Of Heaven's Almighty. Thou to me thy thoughts
Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart;
Both waking we were one; how then can now
Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest imposed;
New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise
In us who serve, new counsels, to debate
What doubtful may ensue: more in this place
To utter is not safe. Assemble thou
Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;
Tell them, that by command, ere yet dim night
Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
And all who under me their banners wave,
Homeward with flying march, where we possess
The quarters of the north; there to prepare
Fit entertainment to receive our King
The great Messiah, and his new commands,
Who speedily through all the hierarchies
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.
So spake the false Archangel, and infused
Bad influence into the unwary breast
Of his associate: He together calls,
Or several one by one, the regent Powers,
Under him regent; tells, as he was taught,
That the Most High commanding, now ere night,
Now ere dim night had disencumber'd Heaven,
The great hierarchal standard was to move;
Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound
Or taint integrity. But all obey'd
The wonted signal, and superior voice

Of their great potentate; for great indeed
His name, and high was his degree in Heaven:
His countenance as the morning star that guides
The starry flock, allured them, and with lies
Drew after him the third part of Heaven's host.
Meanwhile the Eternal Eye, whose sight discerns
Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
And from within the golden lamps that burn
Nightly before him, saw without their light
Rebellion rising; saw in whom, how spread
Among the sons of morn, what multitudes
Were banded to oppose his high decree;
And smiling to his only Son thus said.
Son, thou in whom my glory I behold
In full resplendence, Heir of all my might,
Nearly it now concerns us to be sure
Of our omnipotence, and with what arms
We mean to hold what anciently we claim
Of deity or empire; such a foe
Is rising, who intends to erect his throne
Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north;
Nor so content, hath in his thought to try
In battle what our power is, or our right.
Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
With speed what force is left, and all employ
In our defence, lest unawares we lose
This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.
To whom the Son, with calm aspect and clear,
Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,
Made answer. Mighty Father, thou thy foes
Justly hast in derision, and secure
Laughst at their vain designs and tumults vain,
Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
Illustrates, when they see all regal power
Given me to quell their pride, and in event

Know whether I be dexterous to subdue
Thy rebels, or be found the worst in Heaven.
So spake the Son; but Satan with his Powers
Far was advanced on winged speed, an host
Innumerable as the stars of night,
Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun
Impearls on every leaf and every flower.
Regions they pass'd, the mighty regencies
Of Seraphim, and Potentates, and Thrones,
In their triple degrees; regions to which
All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
Than what this garden is to all the earth,
And all the sea, from one entire globose
Stretch'd into longitude; which having pass'd,
At length into the limits of the north
They came, and Satan to his royal seat
High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
Raised on a mount, with pyramids and towers
From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold;
The palace of great Lucifer, (so call
That structure in the dialect of men
Interpreted), which not long after, he
Affecting all equality with God,
In imitation of that mount whereon
Messiah was declared in sight of Heaven,
The Mountain of the Congregation call'd;
For thither he assembled all his train,
Pretending so commanded, to consult
About the great reception of their king
Thither to come, and with calumnious art
Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears.
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
If these magnific titles yet remain
Not merely titular, since by decree
Another now hath to himself engross'd
All power, and us eclipsed, under the name

Of King anointed, for whom all this haste
Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here,
This only to consult how we may best,
With what may be devised of honours new,
Receive him coming to receive from us
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile!
Too much to one; but double how indured,
To one, and to his image now proclaim'd?
But what if better counsels might erect
Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke?
Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend
The supple knee? Ye will not, if I trust
To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves
Natives and sons of Heaven possess'd before
By none; and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free; for orders and degrees
Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
Who can in reason then, or right, assume
Monarchy over such as live by right
His equals, if in power and splendour less,
In freedom equal? Or can introduce
Law and edict on us, who without law
Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,
And look for adoration to the abuse
Of those imperial titles, which assert
Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve.
  Thus far his bold discourse without control
Had audience; when among the Seraphim
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal adored
The Deity, and divine commands obey'd,
Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe
The current of his fury thus opposed.
  O argument blasphemous, false and proud!
Words which no ear ever to hear in Heaven
Expected, least of all from thee, Ingrate,
In place thyself so high above thy peers.

Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
The just decree of God, pronounced and sworn,
That to his only Son by right endued
With regal sceptre, every soul in Heaven
Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due
Confess him rightful King? Unjust, thou sayst,
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
And equal over equals to let reign,
One over all with unsucceeded power.
Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute
With him the points of liberty, who made
Thee what thou art, and form'd the Powers of Heaven
Such as he pleased, and circumscribed their being?
Yet, by experience taught, we know how good,
And of our good and of our dignity
How provident he is; how far from thought
To make us less, bent rather to exalt
Our happy state under one head more near
United. But to grant it thee unjust,
That equal over equals monarch reign;
Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,
Or all angelic nature join'd in one,
Equal to him begotten Son? by whom,
As by his Word, the Mighty Father made
All things, even thee; and all the Spirits of Heaven
By him created in their bright degrees,
Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory named
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
Essential Powers: nor by his reign obscured,
But more illustrious made; since he the head
One of our number thus reduced becomes;
His laws our laws; all honour to him done
Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,
And tempt not these; but hasten to appease
The incensed Father, and the incensed Son,
While pardon may be found in time besought.

So spake the fervent Angel; but his zeal
None seconded, as out of season judged,
Or singular, and rash: whereat rejoiced
The Apostate, and more haughty thus replied.
That we were formed then sayst thou? and the work
Of secondary hands, by task transferr'd
From Father to his Son? Strange point, and new!
Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd: who
When this creation was? Rememberest thou [saw
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?
We know no time when we were not as now;
Know none before us; self-begot, self-raised
By our own quickening power, when fatal course
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
Of this our native Heaven, etherial sons.
Our puissance is our own, our own right hand
Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
Who is our equal: Then thou shalt behold
Whether by supplication we intend
Address, and to begirt the almighty throne
Beseeching or besieging. This report,
These tidings, carry to the anointed King;
And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.

He said; and as the sound of waters deep
Hoarse murmur echoed to his words applause
Through the infinite host; nor less for that
The flaming Seraph fearless, though alone
Incompass'd round with foes, thus answer'd bold.

O alienate from God, O Spirit accursed,
Forsaken of all good, I see thy fall
Determined, and thy hapless crew involved
In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread
Both of thy crime and punishment; henceforth
No more to be troubled how to quit the yoke
Of God's Messiah: those indulgent laws
Will not be now vouchsafed; other decrees

To Sleep

O soft embalmer of the still midnight
Shutting with careful fingers and benign
Our gloom-pleased eyes embowered from the light
~~Of love or leaving candles~~
As welcome as darkness is dinner
O sister sleep, if so it please thee close
Mine willing eyes in midst of this thine hymn
Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws
To sweet dark dews o'er every fevered brow
Then shut the hushed Casket of my soul
And turn the key round in the oiled ward
And let it rest until the morn has stolen
Right hence from the ~~world~~ ear and slandering bourn